佐武と市捕物控 8

―夏の詩―

石森章太郎

SHOGAKUKAN BUNKO

■夏のお江戸の名物は、花火、見せ物、夏祭り。もひとつ名物佐武と市、人もうわさの名コンビ。

その片われの仕込(しこみ)の市が、幼き日々、一夏を共に遊び過ごした旅芸人の少女。今もその面影(おもかげ)を残す少女こそ、事件に巻きこまれ、行方不明となった、市の初恋の相手だった。

デザイン　毛井ヒロテル
カバー装画　角田純男

佐武と市捕物控 8
石森章太郎

278
小学館文庫
330

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小学館文庫

Shogakukan Bunkos
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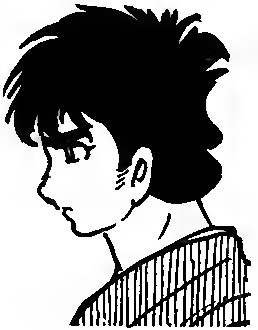
Detective Stories
Volume 8
By Shotaro Ishinomori



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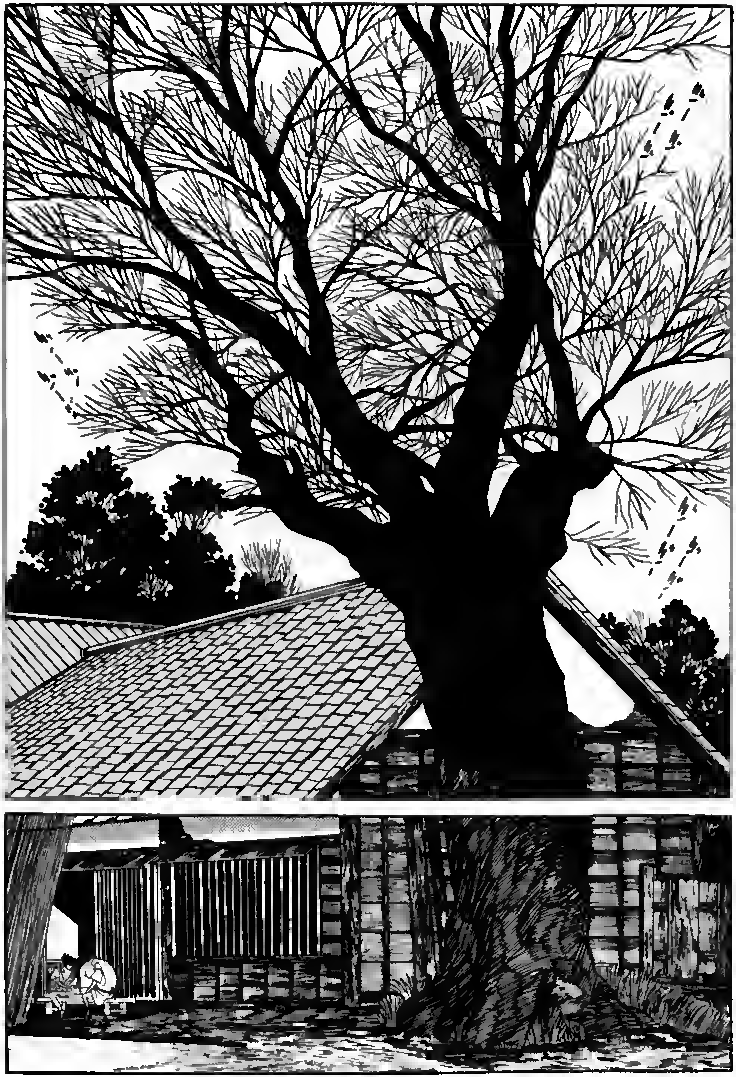
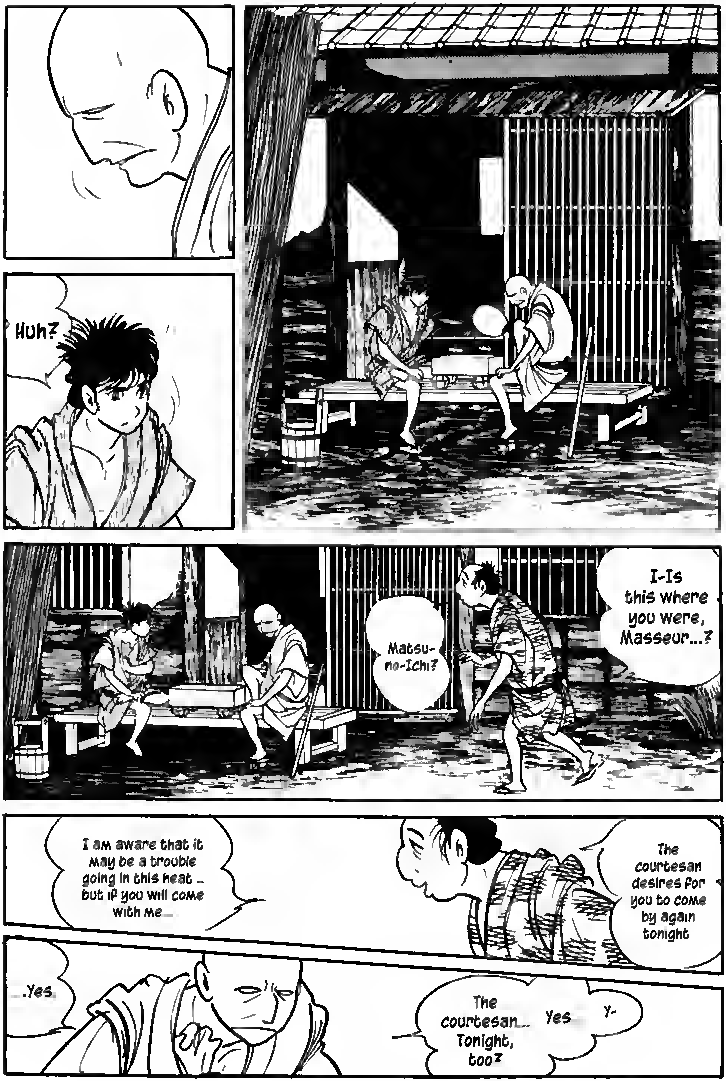
Sabu and Ichi's Detective Stories Volume 8 Contents

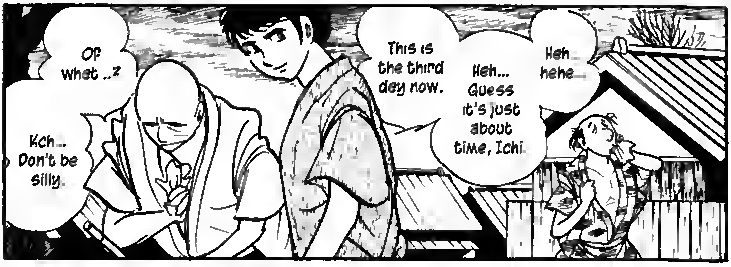
Chapter 42: Poem of Summer
Chapter 43: Otter
Chapter 44: Sound of Summer
Chapter 45: Death of the Blazing Sun
Chapter 46: Rumbling of the Sea
Chapter 47: Gathering Clouds
Chapter 48: All Night in Search of a Harvest Moon or Lake
Chapter 49: Fine Line

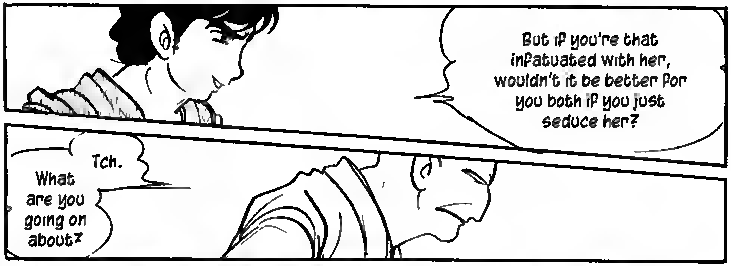
Cover Illustration by Gen'ichi Takise

Chapter 42:
Poem of Summer



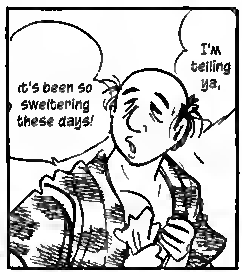

Huh?
I-Is this where you were, Masseur...?
Matsu-no-Ichi?
I am aware that it may be a trouble going in this heat... but if you will come with me...
The courtesan desires for you to come by again tonight
...Yes.
The courtesan... Tonight, too?
Yes
Y-


Oh what ..?
Kch... Don't be silly.
This is the third day now.
Heh... Guess it's just about time, Ichi.
Heh... hehe...


But if you're that infatuated with her, wouldn't it be better for you both if you just seduce her?
Tch.
What are you going on about?

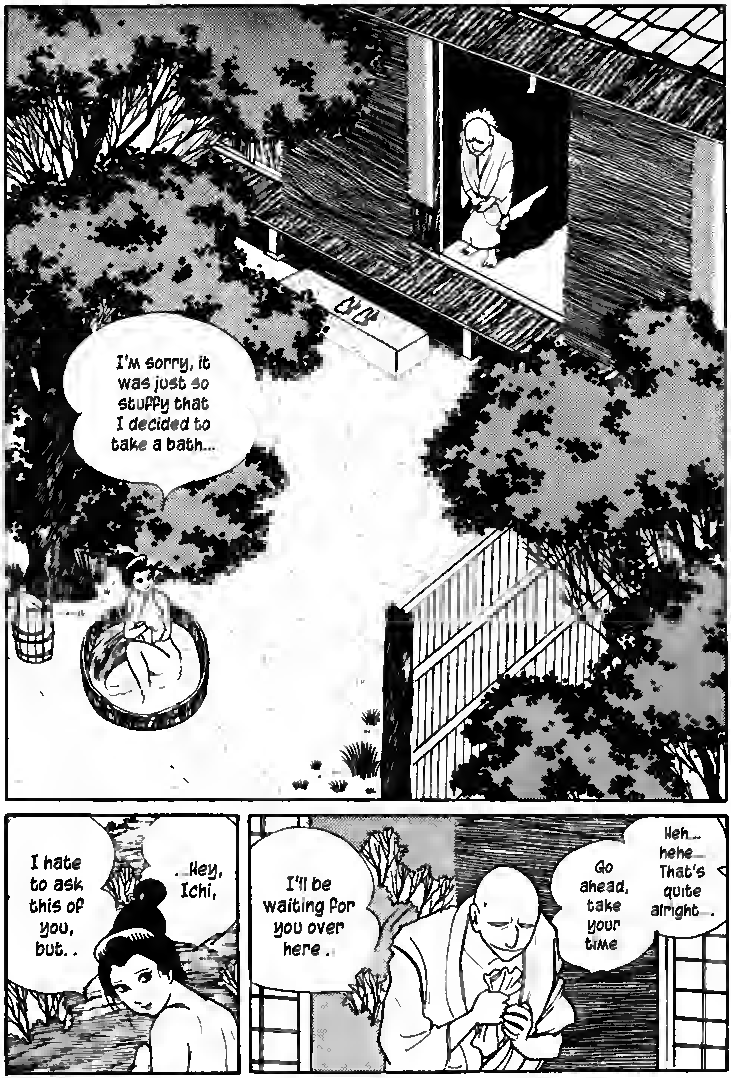
Ehehe

Laber
It's just business, that's all.

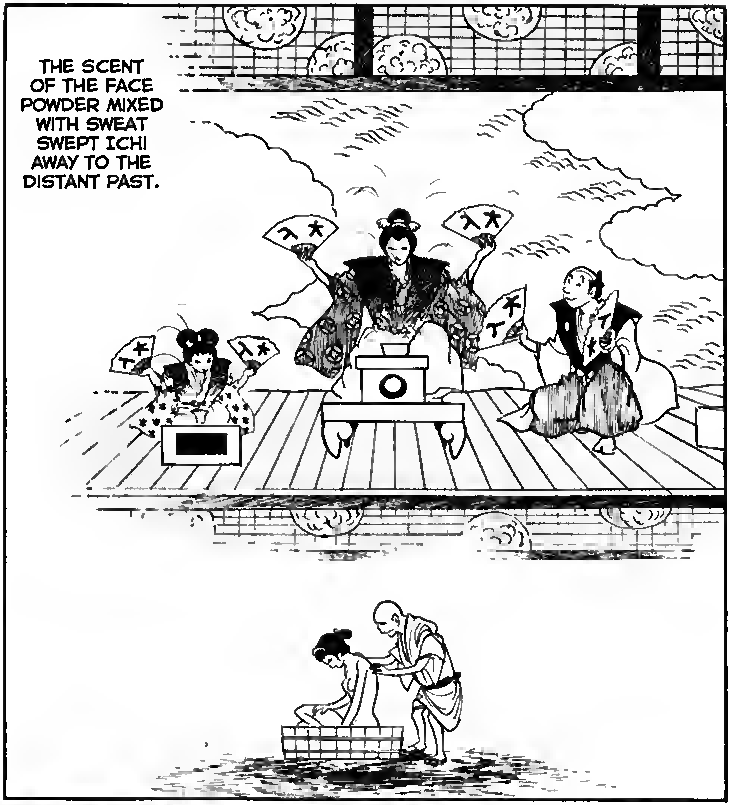

I'm telling ya,
it's been so sweltering these days!

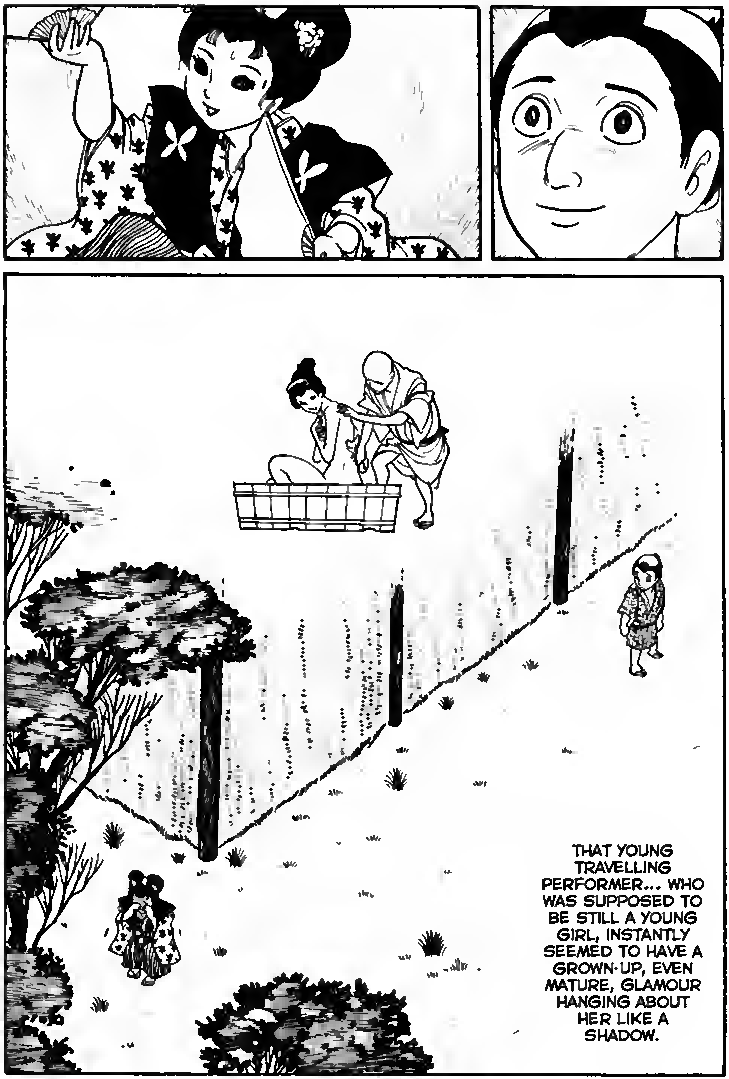
大井川三助丈
羽丹金時
ひのき
尼彩半太夫
市川花之丈
ふじき
大

Bring him around to the back!
Over here!
I've brought the masseur here!
Courtesan!
Courtesan!
Courtesan!
Oh, and I don't need you here anymore... Thanks for your help!
...Thank you, Courtesan...
For enlisting my services once again...
Oh, no, I should be the one thanking you,
For coming here with utmost haste in this heat...
ミカミ-110

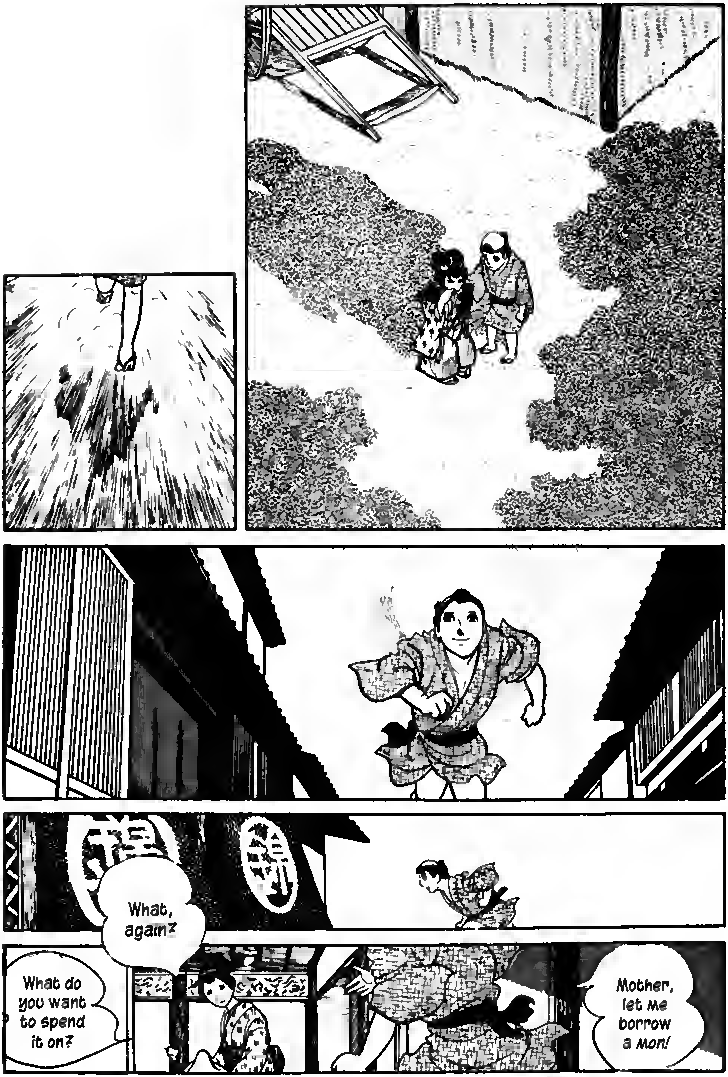

I'm sorry, it was just so stuffy that I decided to take a bath...
I hate to ask this of you, but..
...Hey, Ichi,
I'll be waiting for you over here.
Go ahead, take your time
Heh... hehe... That's quite alright...

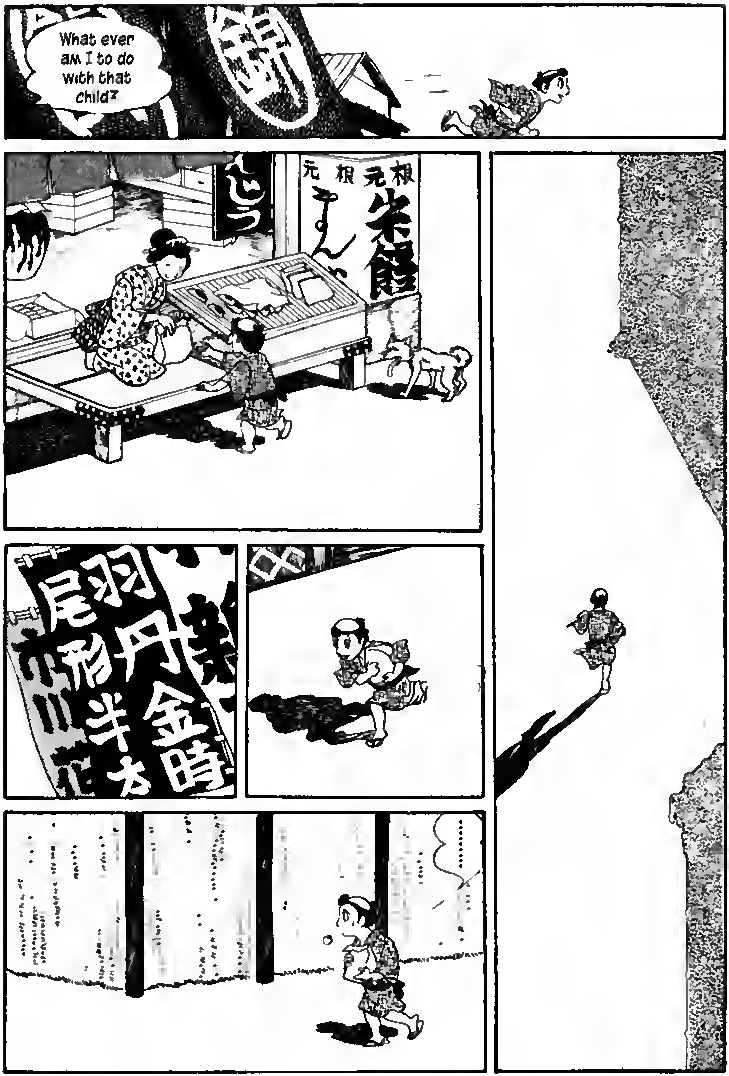
B-But that's...
You went me to wash your back?
Huh?
Don't need to stress because I'm blind
...That's quite alright, if you say so... I'll wash your back.
I know it's quite self-centered of me...
But I feel that around you... I...
Well, there's that...
But I just feel I can confide on you with an easy conscience
.....

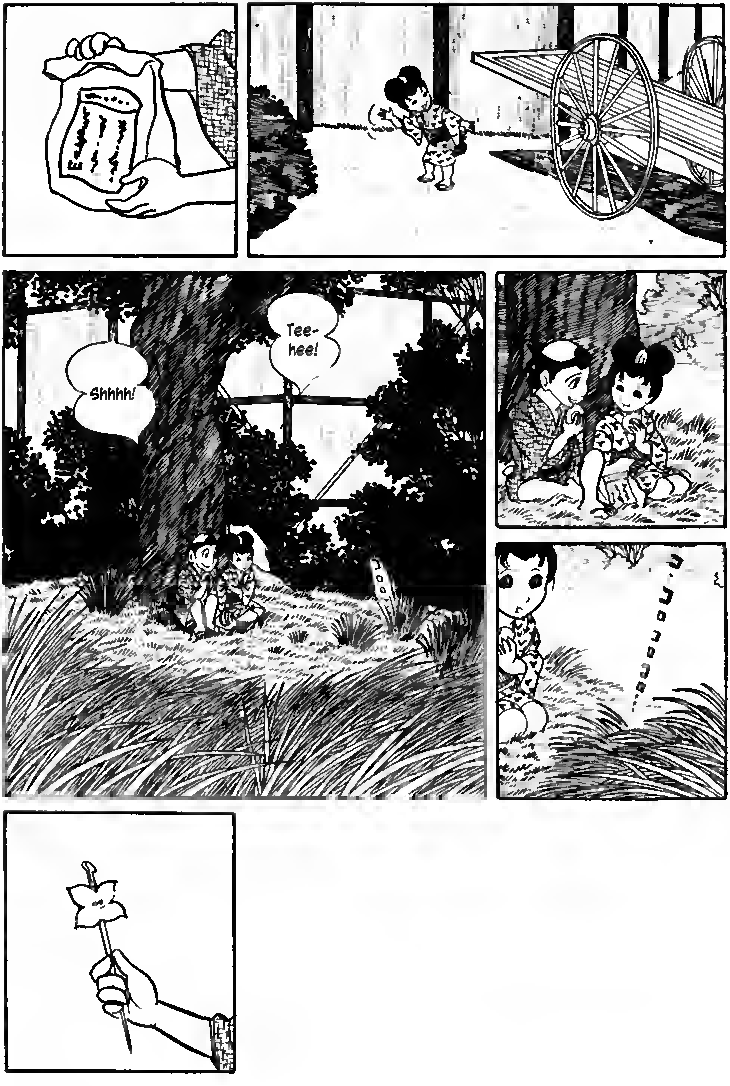

THE SCENT OF THE FACE POWDER MIXED WITH SWEAT SWEPT ICHI AWAY TO THE DISTANT PAST.


THAT YOUNG TRAVELLING PERFORMER... WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE STILL A YOUNG GIRL, INSTANTLY SEEMED TO HAVE A GROWN-UP, EVEN MATURE, GLAMOUR HANGING ABOUT HER LIKE A SHADOW.

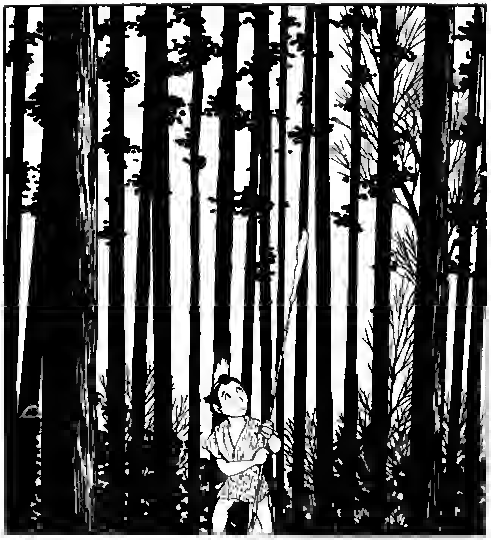
W...W-What's the matter?
Why... have you been crying?
.....
I-I'm not crying at all!
I'm just...
just cooling myself off...
...My master beat me because I failed my act

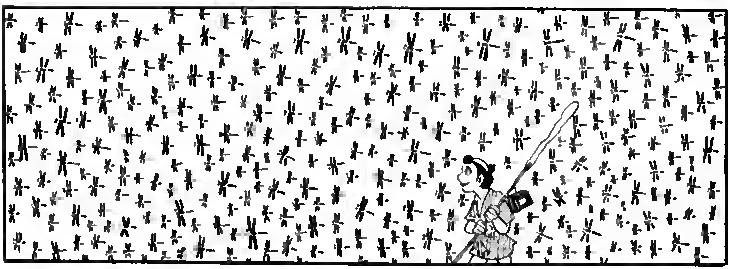

What, again?
What do you want to spend it on?
Mother, let me borrow a mon!

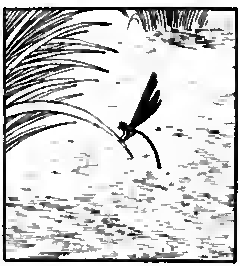

What ever am I to do with that child?
元根元根
米饅
金時
丹羽
半ち
尾形


Tee-hee!
Shhhh!

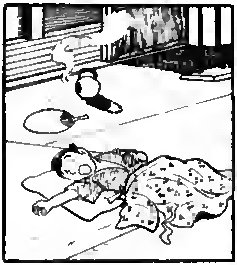
...It's gorgeous...
Thank you

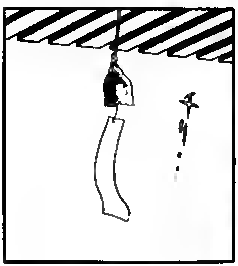


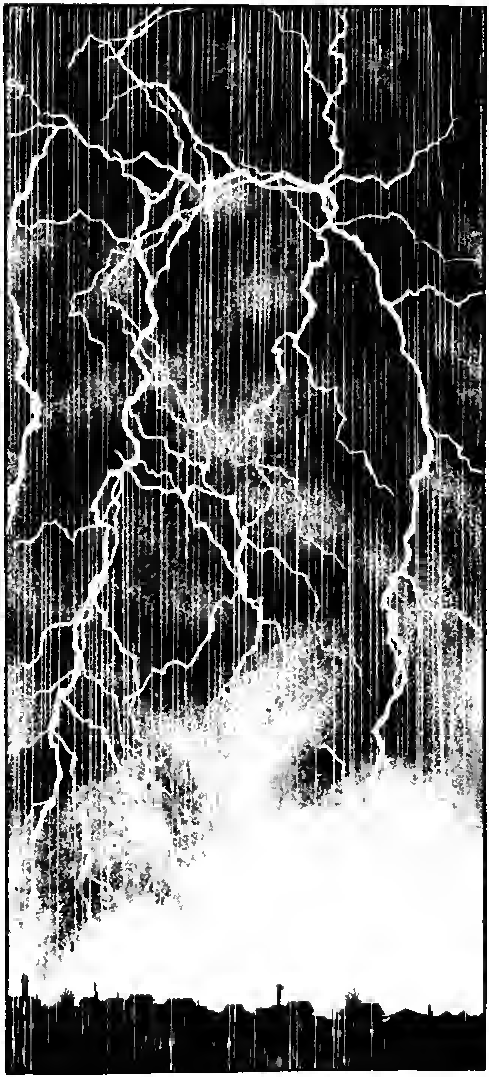


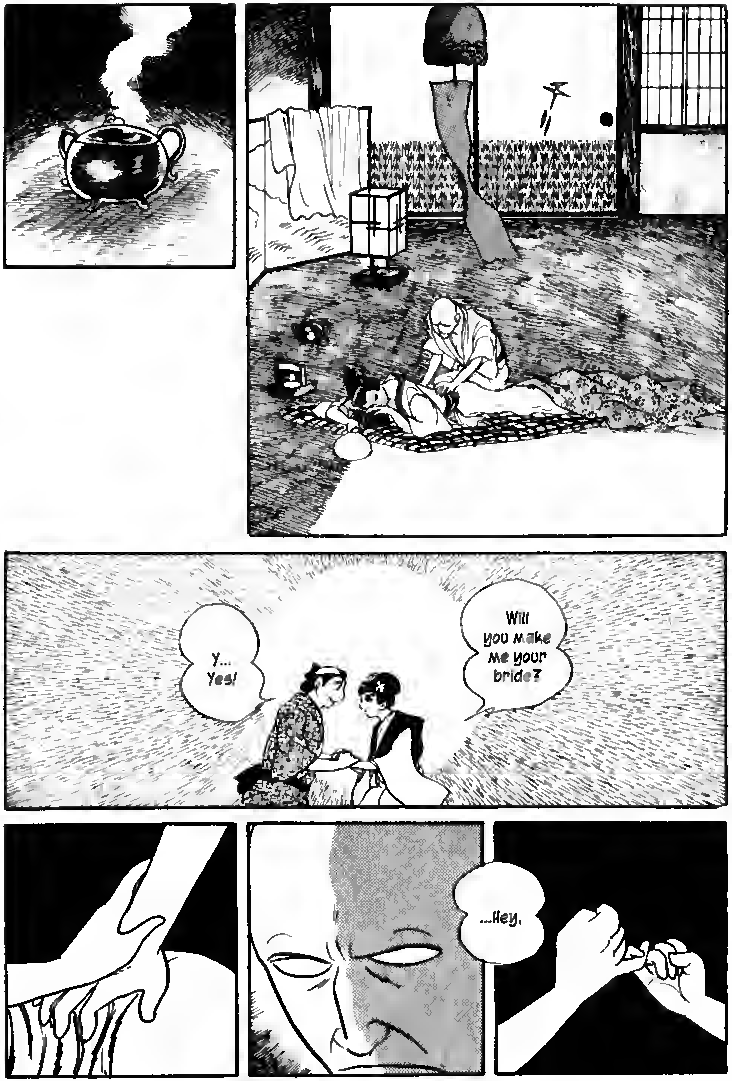


Hey, you!

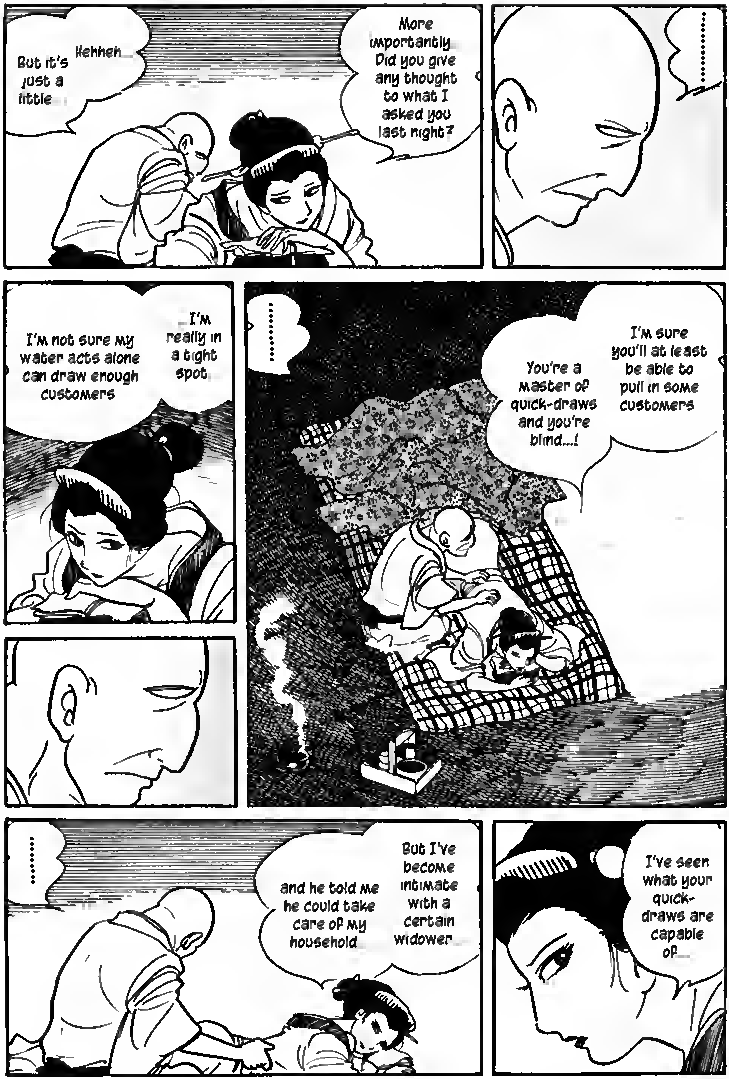


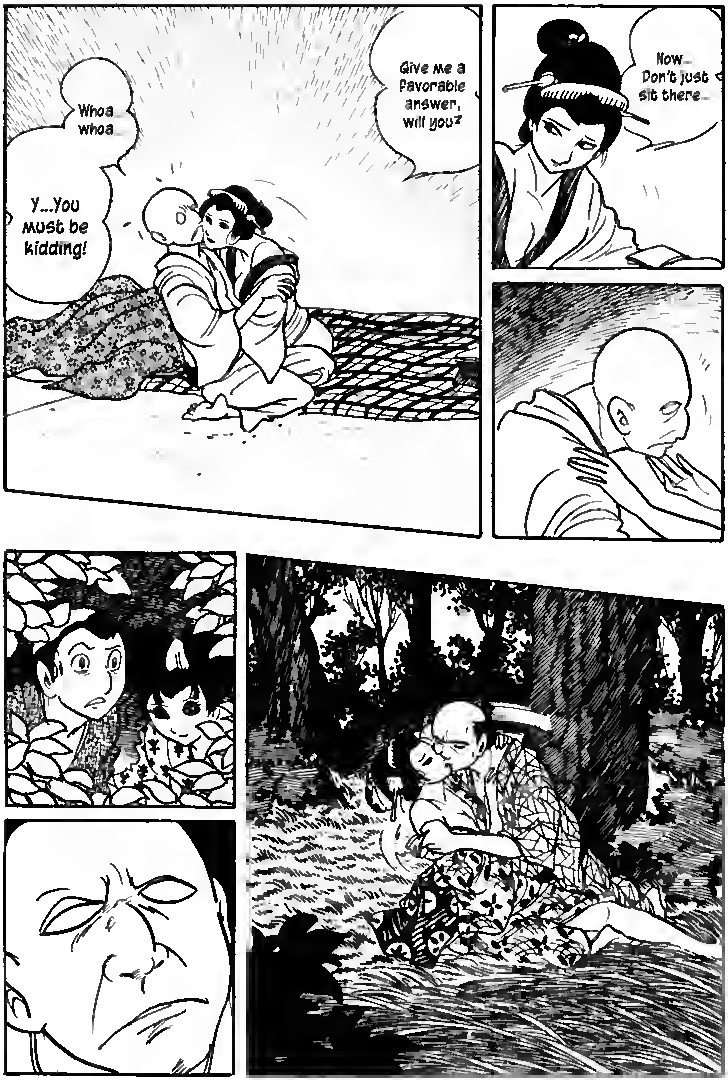




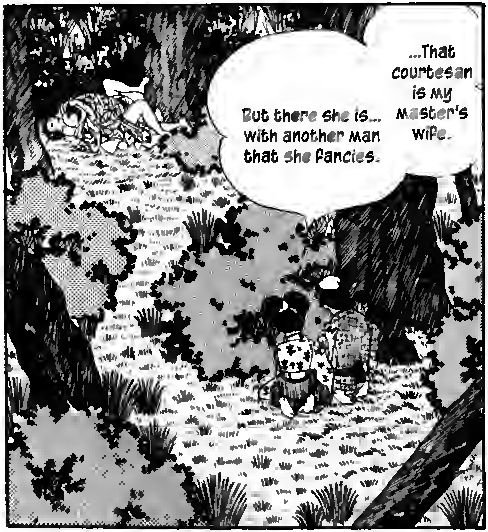

Will you make Me your bride?
Y... Yes!
...Hey.

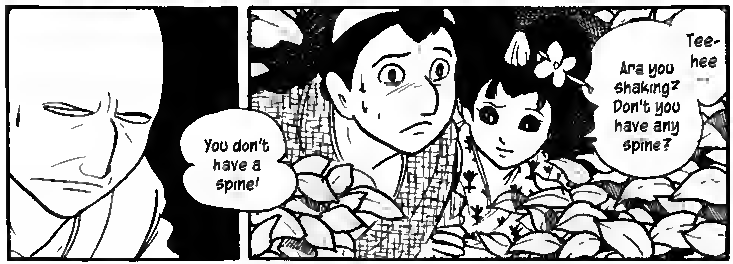
I said "hey"... Ichi!
y.. yesz
I wonder
Huh?
O-Of course not! Don't be ridiculous!
You're not... thinking about another woman, are you?
Oh, please, what are you pondering?

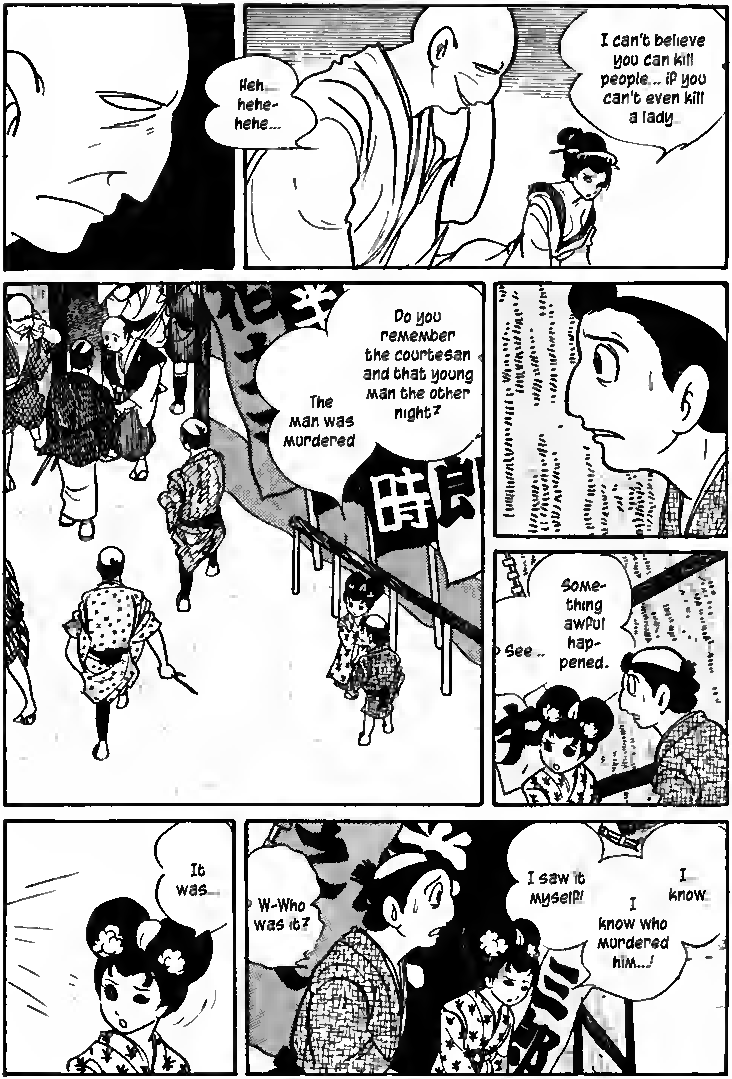

But it's just a little
Kehheh
More importantly Did you give any thought to what I asked you last night?
.....
I'm not sure my water acts alone can draw enough customers
I'm really in a tight spot
.....
You're a master of quick-draws and you're blind....!
I'm sure you'll at least be able to pull in some customers
.....
and he told me he could take care of my household
But I've become intimate with a certain widower
I've seen what your quick-draws are capable of....

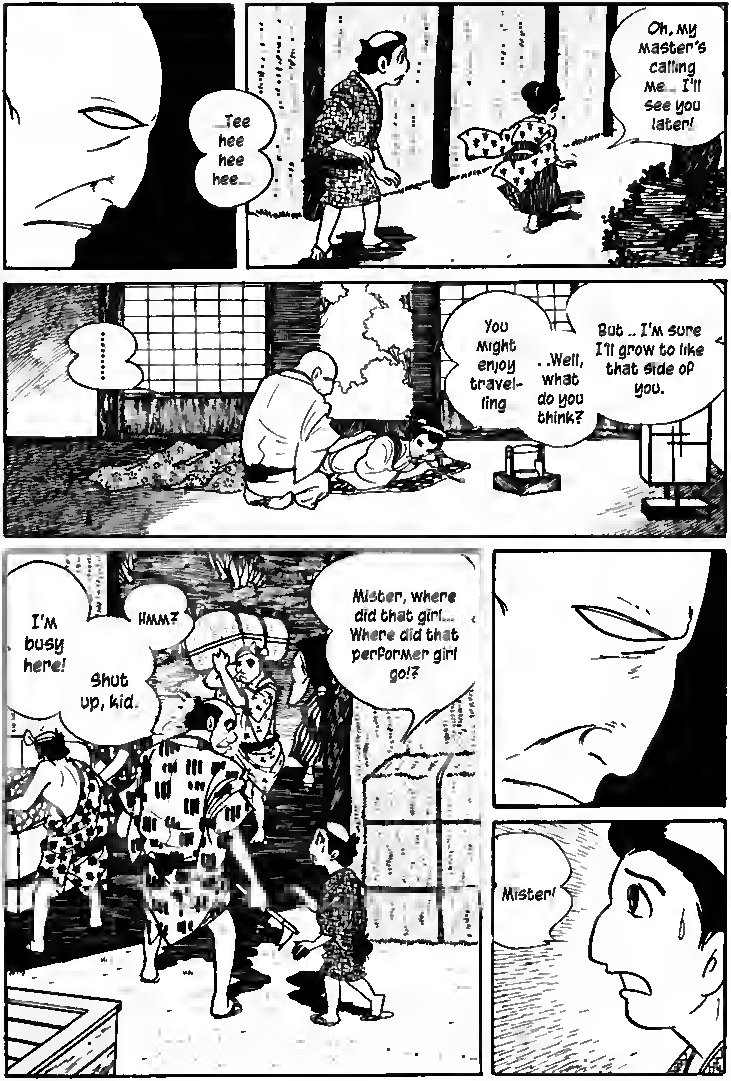

Whoa whoa
Y...You must be kidding!
Give me a favorable answer, will you?
Now... Don't just sit there...

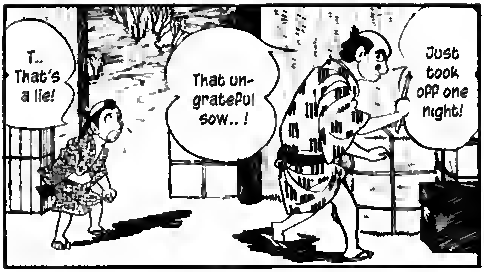
Hmpf... I heard you were a master of quick-draws .. But you don't have any backbone, do you?
Heh... hehe..
You said it..

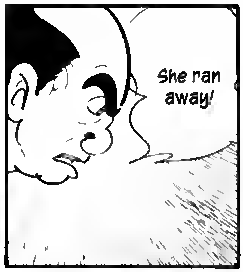

...That courtesan is my Master's wife.
But there she is... with another man that she fancies.

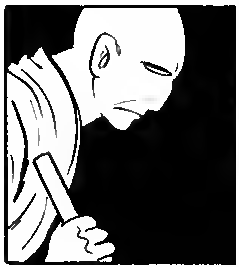

You don't have a spine!
Tee-hee ...
Are you shaking? Don't you have any spine?


Heh... hehe-hehe...
I can't believe you can kill people... if you can't even kill a lady...
Do you remember the courtesan and that young man the other night?
The man was murdered
時良
See...
Something awful happened.
It was...
W-Who was it?
I saw it myself!
I know.
I know who murdered him...!


...Tee hee hee hee...
Oh, my Master's calling me... I'll see you later!
.....
You might enjoy travel-ling
..Well, what do you think?
But .. I'm sure I'll grow to like that side of you.
I'm busy here!
Hmm?
Shut up, kid.
Mister, where did that girl... Where did that performer girl go!?
Mister!

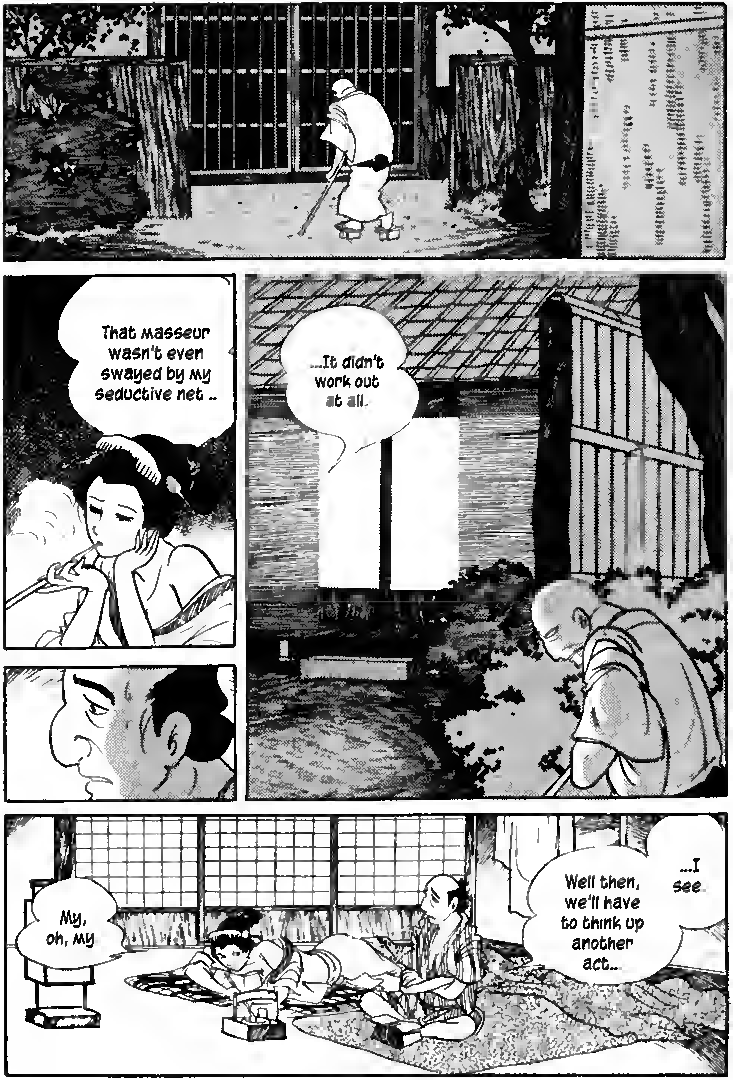

T... That's a lie!
That ungrateful sow..!
Just took off one night!

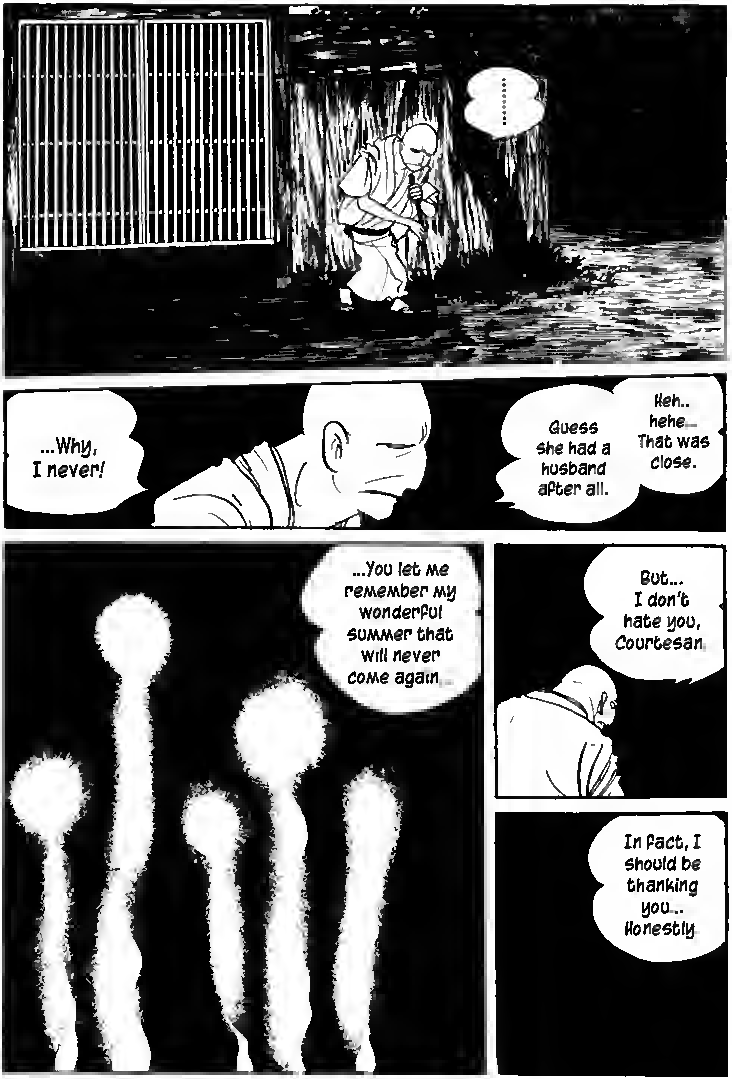

She ran away!



Yes, it was a lie. Now that I think back on it... it was because she said she knew who killed the courtesan's lover...!
It's not true!

That was the end of my summer.
I seem to have forgotten my pipe
How could I?
...Oh.


That masseur wasn't even swayed by my seductive net ..
...It didn't work out at all.
My, oh, my
Well then, we'll have to think up another act...
...I see.


.....
...Why, I never!
Guess she had a husband after all.
Heh.. hehe... That was close.
...You let me remember my wonderful summer that will never come again.
But... I don't hate you, Courtesan.
In fact, I should be thanking you... Honestly.

August 1970 "Poem of Summer" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 62
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 43: Otter

！

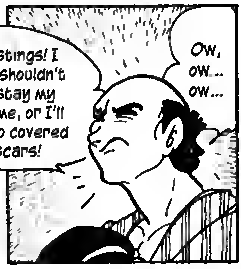
コトコト

For you thinking strange thoughts... and not saying a word!
Ump? That was divine punishment!
Owww .. U-Hey! What was that for?
Tch! Look, you burnad Ma!
You were probably fantasizing about another woman, weren't you .. you philanderer!?
That's right
Str-ange thou-ghts?
It's just about time for him to come home, so I'll have to take my leave...!
That's ridiculous I was thinking about your husband
Well, I'm going to go get some sushi, than we can have ourselves a drink and spend the night together
He's not coming

Heh... I wasn't just talking about my stomach.
...I'm completely full now.
Ooooh... That smarts.
Don't need any.
Come on!
I still haven't had my fill yet...
What's your problem?
A villainz
If we're found out, we'll both be out of house and home...
Trust me... He'll be here
Can't do that.
He's not coming...
And even if he does come home, you shouldn't be startled. Cause you're a villain...
Yes.
For leaving me like this.
If only I hadn't met you...
Speak for yourself! I was the pure and innocent one here!
Which one of us was it that corrupted a pure, innocent, hardworking young man right down to the core.?
Ohh, well I believe that's my line.

A pure and innocent mistress, huh?
Hehehe...
That's right!
And you're just a malicious dog who's pilfered his benefactor's true love!

Your leg was already like that to begin with.
Hmpf
Come now, just once more...
Hey, I said stop it...

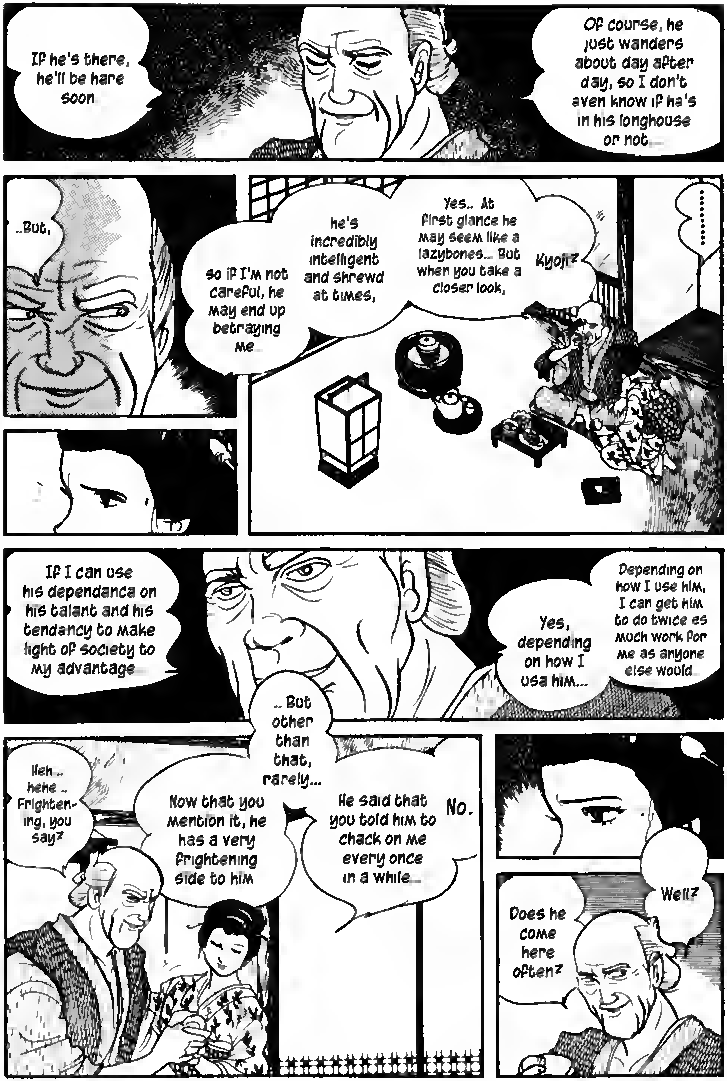

Ow, ow... ow...
That stings! I really shouldn't overstay my welcome, or I'll wind up covered in scars!

Oh, no!
Why not? You're so annoying! I'm not letting you leave!
Ow... I-It hurts!

ガガ…
Hmpf.
..And there he is. Exit stage right...
Com-ing!
……

You I locked up extra early today... Are you alright?
Oh, must I remind you?
If I recall, you were the one who suggested I leave the door locked in the daytime at all times because you were worried about leaving a woman by herself...
And...
Why yes, as in matter of fact, you did...
Hmp!. did I really say that?
Oh, did I?
But you were the one who said you don't want to trouble anyone else...
I told you, we could hire a house-keeper...
What's that?
I myself?.. am quite afraid of being charmed by a rat...

Hehe he..
..I guess it slipped both of our minds!
Yes, of course
Wait. Not now. I sent a messenger... So he might be coming
Ahhh
..Were you lone-some?
Huh?
Who's "he"..?
Kyoji, remember? I have some business with him.

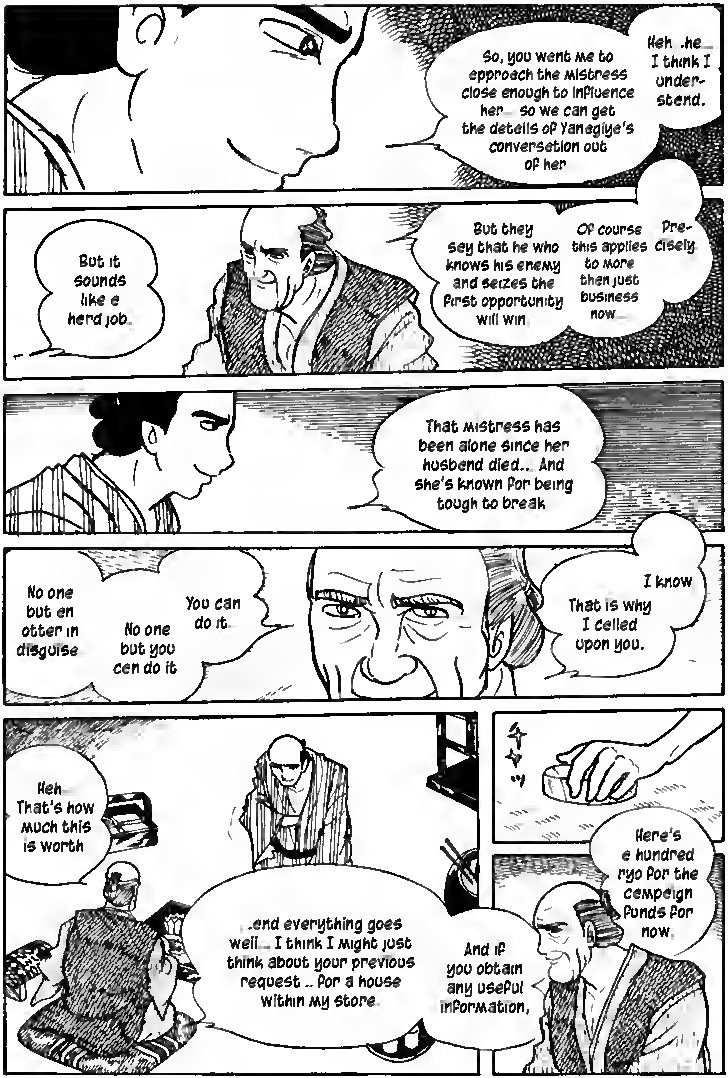

If he's there, he'll be here soon
Of course, he just wanders about day after day, so I don't even know if he's in his longhouse or not
..But,
so if I'm not careful, he may end up betraying me
he's incredibly intelligent and shrewd at times,
Yes.. At first glance he may seem like a lazybones... But when you take a closer look,
Kyoh!?
If I can use his dependance on his talent and his tendancy to make light of society to my advantage
Yes, depending on how I use him...
Depending on how I use him, I can get him to do twice as much work for me as anyone else would
.. But other than that, rarely...
He said that you told him to check on me every once in a while
No.
Now that you mention it, he has a very frightening side to him
Heh.. hehe.. Frightening, you say?
Well?
Does he come here often?

So I guess, even you... You, whose face seems to say you have not a fear in the world, have fears!
Hahaha, I see
..Frightening?
But... Seeing how you can make use of such a frightening person, that makes you all the more ..
so I'm cowering in fear all year...
I have so much to fear in this world.
My, how obnoxious you are! I may not look it, but I am still a fragile woman
afraid of otters
No, even I have fears
I am...
How about you... You're not afraid of anything, are you?
I...
After all, legends say that otters disguise themselves as attractive men and kidnap the hearts of women

Hehe.. Now make sure you watch yourself, so you aren't seduced by an otter
So while I... do not fear foxes or tanuki, I am afraid of otters
But then again, women let themselves be seduced by otters because they have holes in their hearts...
Tee-hee-hee...
I'll be fine Even if I want one to come, you're the only one
Who comes to see a woman as dull as me...
Oh, don't mention it...
I haven't had anything that I'd have needed help with
So you're here
I've had a lot of errands to run...
For neglecting to visit...
...Pardon me

Sorry, Master... for being so late.
Glad to see you work even in rain
Well, why don't you treat yourself to three cups of wine for being late?
Alright, I won't refuse...
Heh... You're not the type to refuse
Even if you said "no", your hand would reach for it
You're as foul-mouthed as ever... I just can't match wits with you, Master
Hehe... They say that a foul mouth means a good heart
On the other hand... it's the pretty-faced ones that are otters in disguise
Huh?
Hey, Waka, see how those drops of water are getting his sideburns wet...? Don't you think he looks just like a pine man dripping water?
Hahaha, oh, never-mind
Oh, please don't tease him...

Now that hurts me
...And you're saying I'm an otter?
about how otters disguise themselves as handsome men and seduce women
Hehehe.. We were just talking
W-What do you mean?
Yes...?
Do you know of a teahouse called "Sumida" in Horimachi?
Hehehe... You see, there's been a task that has come in tonight that I want to rely on your "skills" for
Hahaha! No, no need to feign humility. Your looks are more than sufficient.
.....
I've happened to hear rumors lately that Yanagiya and Toraya have been going in and out of there lately.
Your job is to approach Someno and become intimate with her.
By the way... The mistress of that teahouse is a single mature woman named Someno...
Yes.
Aren't Yanagiya and Toraya your business rivals...?


So, you went me to approach the mistress close enough to influence her... so we can get the details of Yanagiya's conversation out of her.
Heh..he... I think I understand.
But it sounds like a hard job.
But they say that he who knows his enemy and seizes the first opportunity will win.
Of course this applies to more than just business now...
Precisely.
That mistress has been alone since her husband died... And she's known for being tough to break.
No one but an otter in disguise
No one but you can do it.
You can do it.
I know. That is why I called upon you.
Heh... That's how much this is worth.
...and everything goes well... I think I might just think about your previous request ... For a house within my store.
And if you obtain any useful information,
Here's a hundred ryo for the campaign funds for now.

My, oh, my, this is just... awful.
You must be secretly thinking that it's just too good to be true, right?
What do you say?

SIGN SUMIDA

Tee hee!
Oh, Madam!
Welcome back!
I'm back.
Oh, what is it?
What's so funny?
Izu-Miya...!?
...Well, the young master of Izumiya has returned
Hee hee...
It seems the young master has his eyes set on you!
And today we finally found out why he never called a geisha
Hee hee hee...
Funny
T-That really is..
...On an old woman like me?
On Me...!?
Huh?

What's that?
Hoh...hoho... But that must be some mistake
Either that, or you were just teasing him...
No, the young master was quite serious... And look here.
My...!!
He asked me to hand this to you...
He was too shy to give it to you in person.
I'll have to return the favor!
If I let him do this for me...
I-I can't accept this!

Enough.
...Now whether or not I return it, I will at least have to pay him my respects once.
He's giving it to you freely...
Why not accept it?
...Well, the truth is, he paid me off...

..Does he visit often?
Yana-giya
Oh? If I'm not mistaken, that's...

Oh?
Does he always come alone?
No,
he always comes in with his daughter.
Huh?
...Yes.
He's a regular customer of my store.
Huh!?
B-But...!
Tee hee...
He's a rather odd one, you see.
Ever since his wife passed away, he's been coddling his daughter.
And I don't think he ever lets her leave his side.
Yes, but Yanagiya always plays very clean...
B-But then...
Is Yanagiya always with his daughter... and no one else...?
...Not even Toraya, for instance...?
Huh?
Oh yes, there was once when Toraya also happened to be here with him...

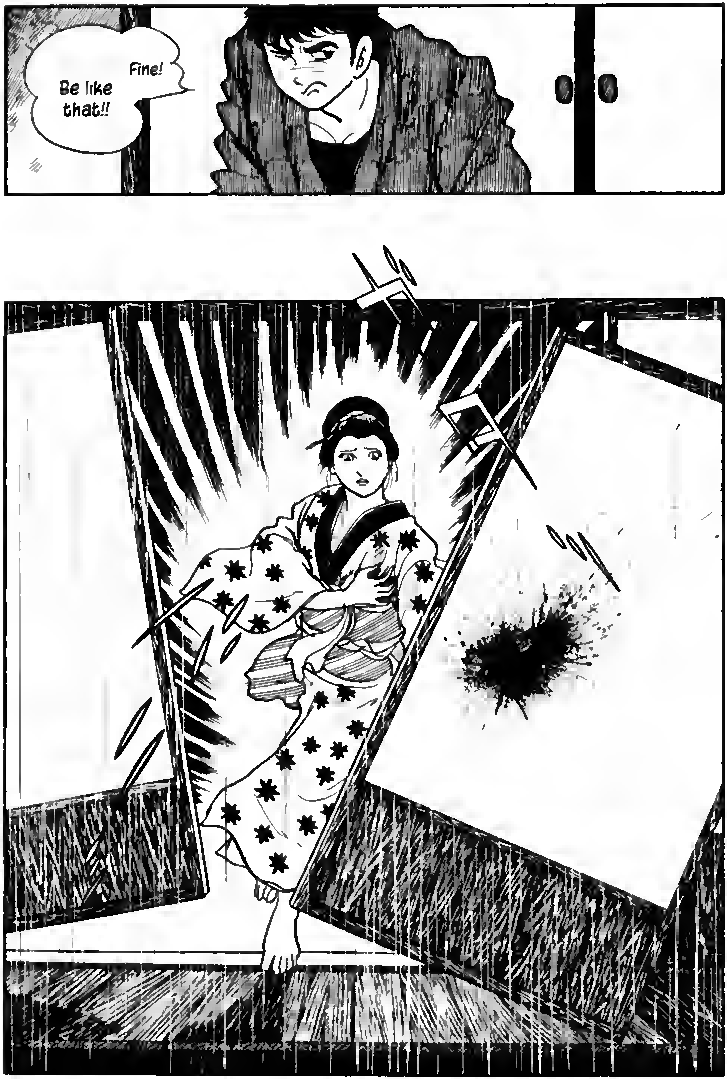
..Young Master!
.....
Oh, no reason... It's just, I had heard some rumors to that effect before....
But never since....
But why do you wish to know...?
.....

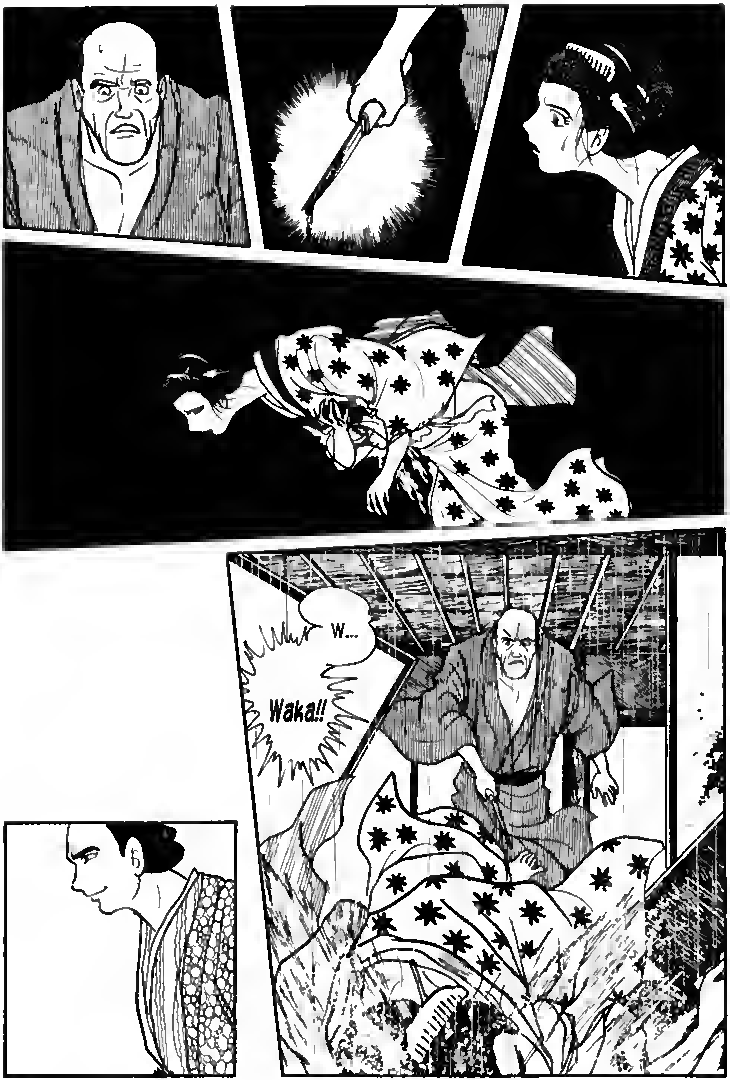
...Yes, I've almost got her to talk...
But I'm going to need more campaign funds...
You're costing me quite a bit.
...First a hundred ryo, then you've asked me for fifty ryo thrice...
Well?
So yes.
Well, she seems to be even more tight-lipped than the rumors say...
Heh..
...Well, then...
...Hmm.
Oh, and you were right...
Yanagiya and Toraya have been meeting frequently, and they're definitely planning something...

...What's going on with you? You haven't come to see me once since...
Hey, you!
Kyoji!!
I'm just busy with work, that's all... I'll come by soon...
Yes...
Waka! Waka...
.....
Why didn't you answer me?
So this is where you were?
...Waka!

He and I...
..Made him do such a terrible thing...!!
I...!!
You made him do such a thing...
T-This is all your fault...
...Dear,
W-What!?
T-Then that means... you really are...!?
Huh? S-Stop!
What do you think you're doing, Waka!?
If only you hadn't...
If only...!!
...You sure know how to drink!!

I returned home without giving in to a woman's advances!!
You must be quite pleased!
Hehe.. You mean when I was with Mr Tanabe ...?
Well, of course... I just escaped from a very dangerous predicament!
.....
I'm honestly telling you I didn't cheat on you!!
...Are you angry!?
Hey, what's the matter?
...At that moment, your face just came into my head...
W-What's your problem..?
What are you so proud about...!?
I just don't want to hear of it!
I don't care whether you cheated on me or not...


Fine!
Be like that!!


W...
Waka!!

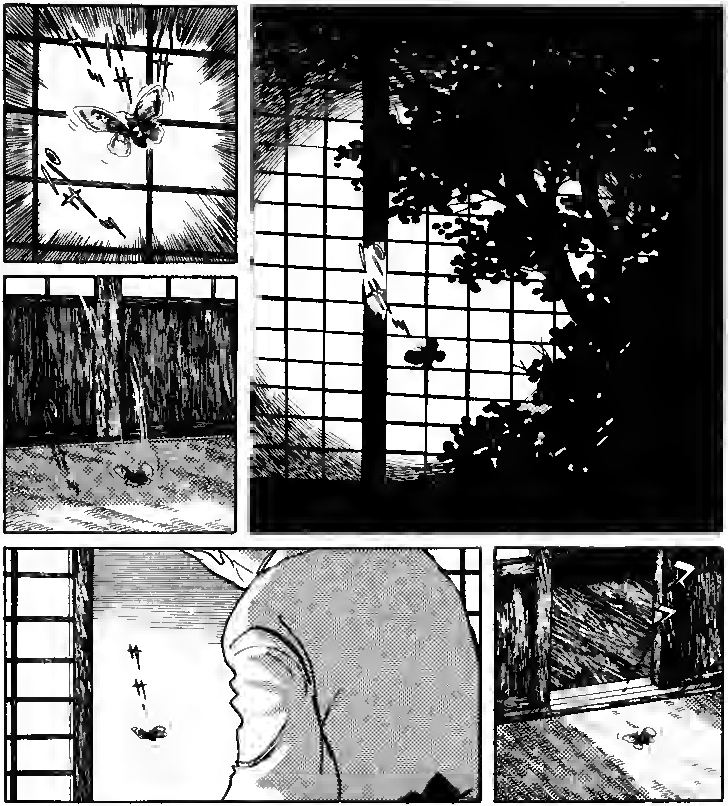
June 1971: "Otter" (FIN)

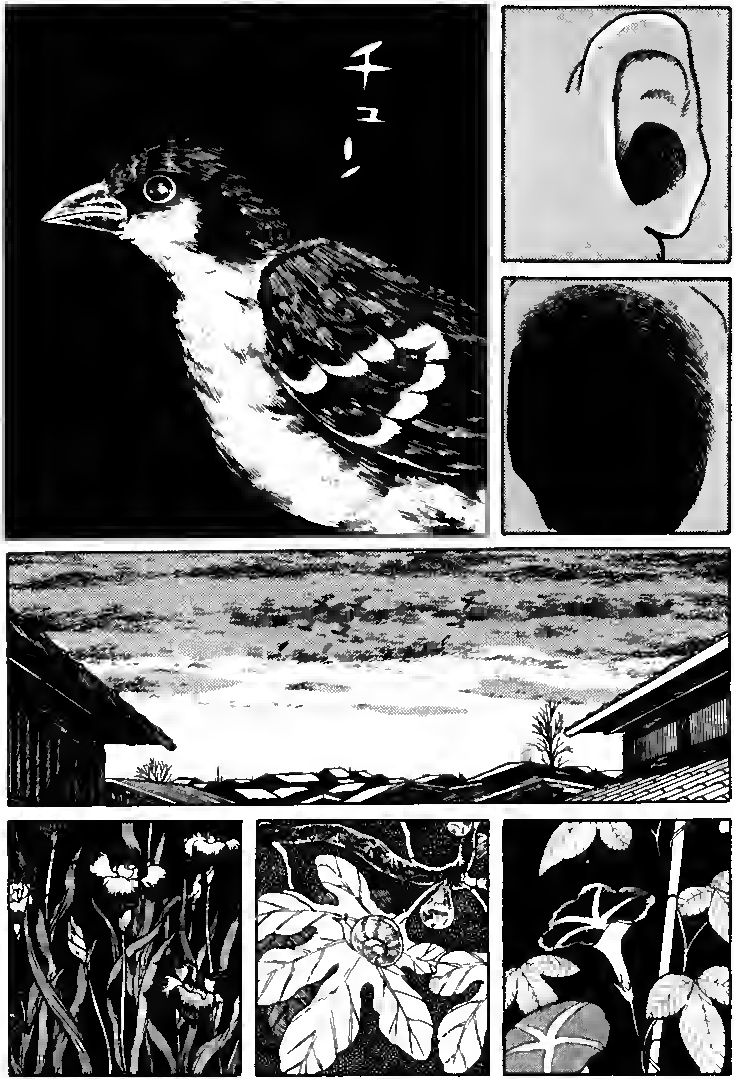
佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 63
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 44: Sound of Summer

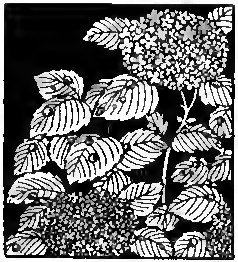
ONCE THE RAINY SEASON ENDS, EDO IS PLUNGED INTO THE HEIGHT OF SUMMER.

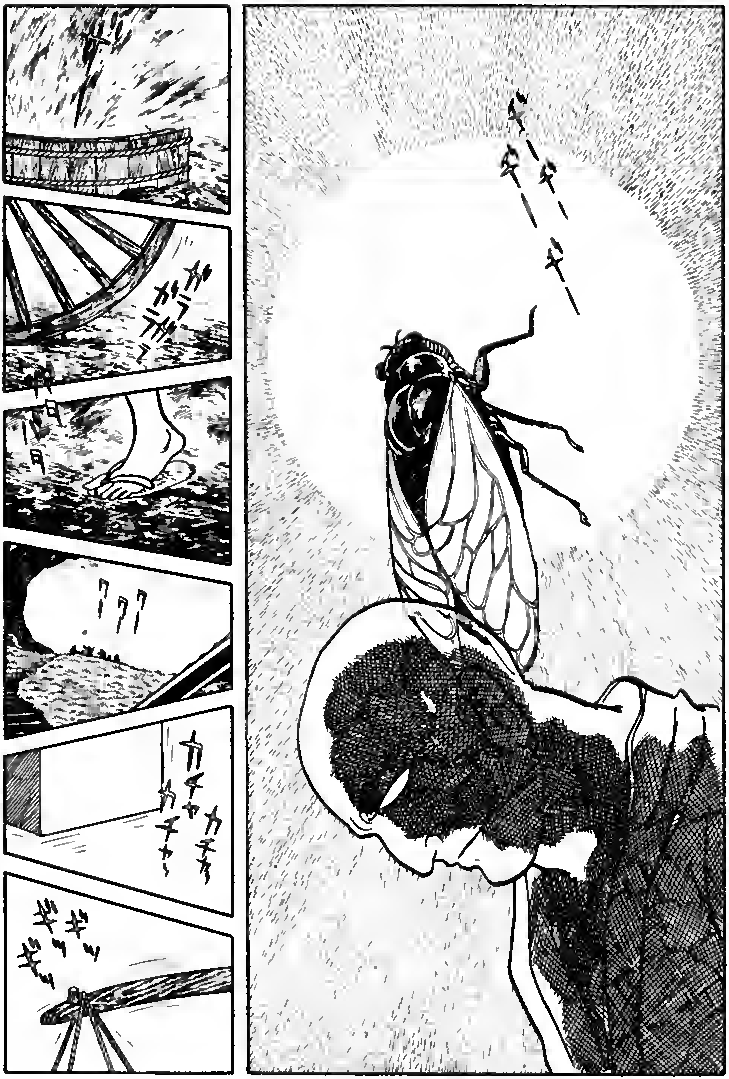
夏の音


A SUMMER MORNING... STARTS WITH THE QUIET SOUND OF CICADAS EMERGING FROM THEIR HUSKS AND THE GLIDE AND FLUTTERING OF THE MOTHS SCATTERING POWDER ON THE DOORS IN THE SEARCH OF THE LIGHT.

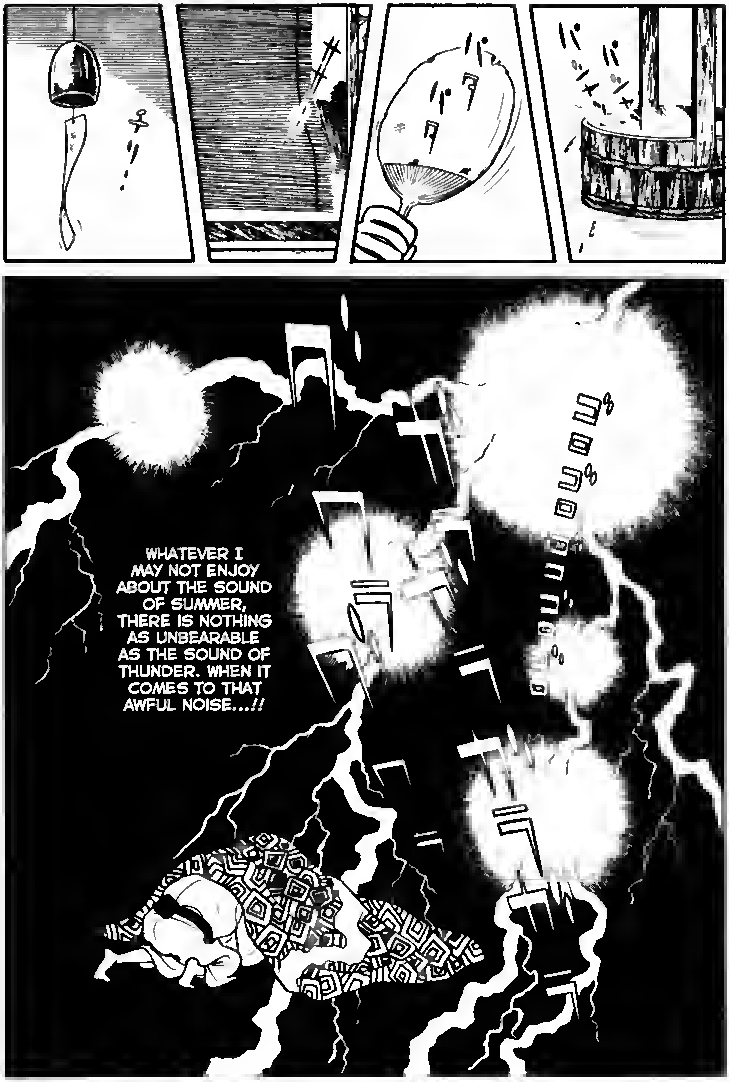

チュリ

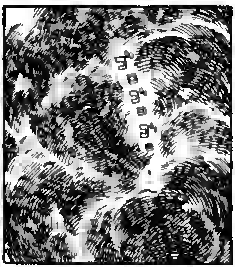
AND SUDDENLY, ALL THE SOUNDS AWAKEN AND SWELL UP AT ONCE. AND THIS... IS THE HOT "SOUND OF SUMMER".

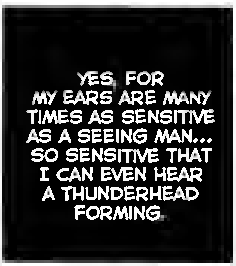


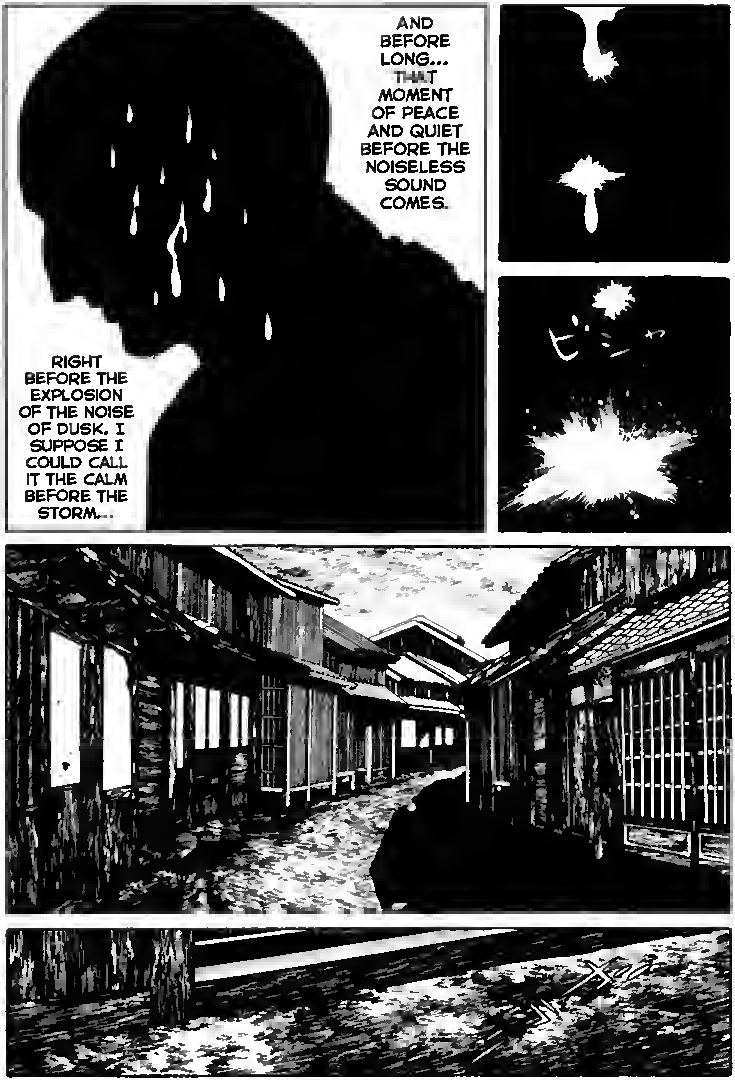

ガラガラ
カチャカチャ
ギーギーギー

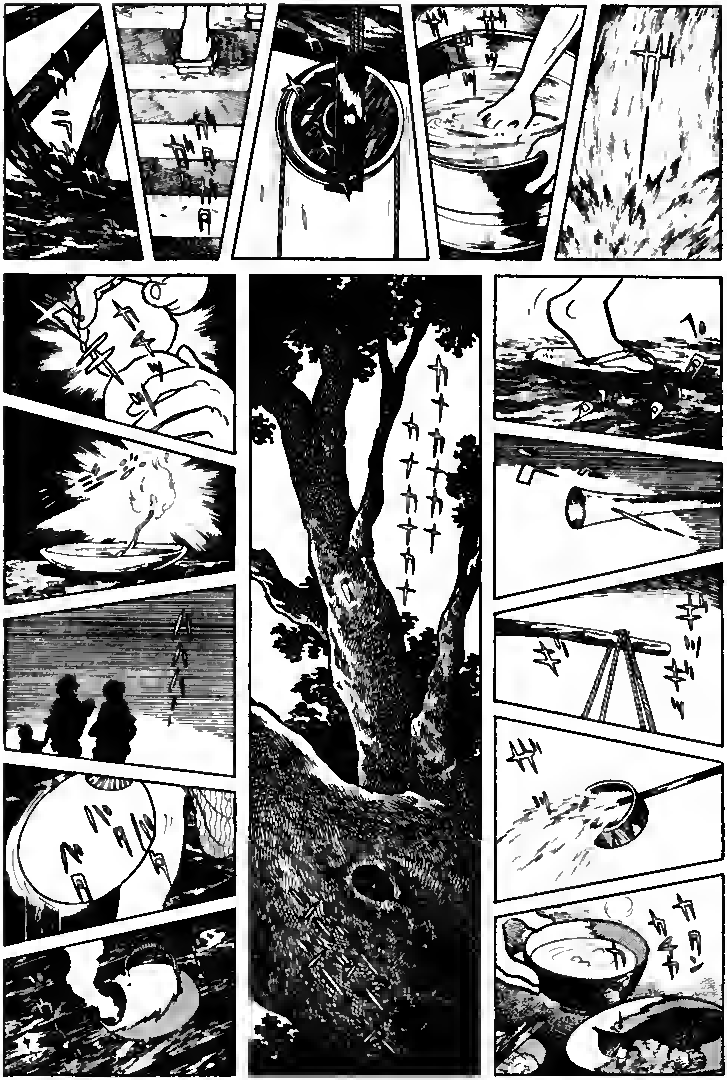
夏の音

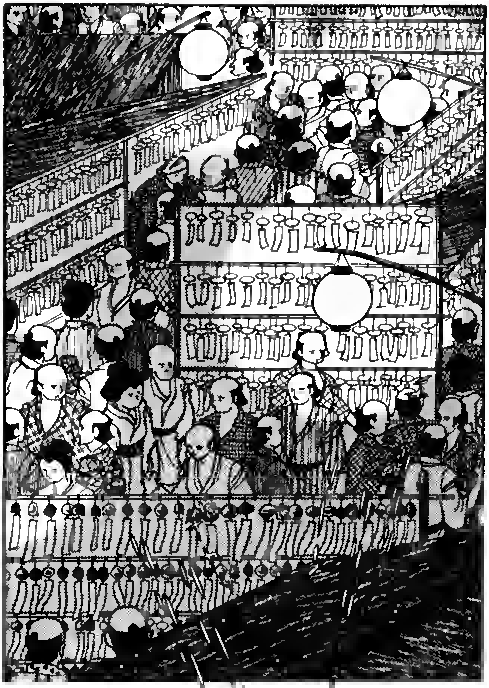

チリ…!
パタ パタ
パシャ…
ゴロゴロゴロゴロ
WHATEVER I MAY NOT ENJOY ABOUT THE SOUND OF SUMMER, THERE IS NOTHING AS UNBEARABLE AS THE SOUND OF THUNDER. WHEN IT COMES TO THAT AWFUL NOISE...!!

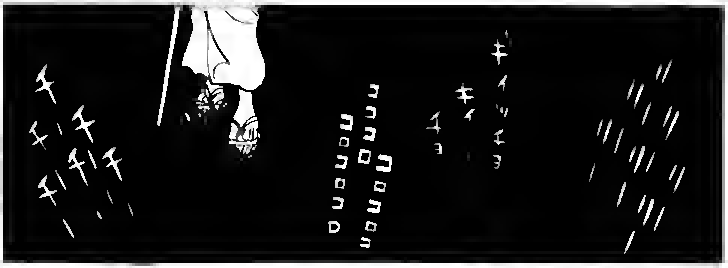


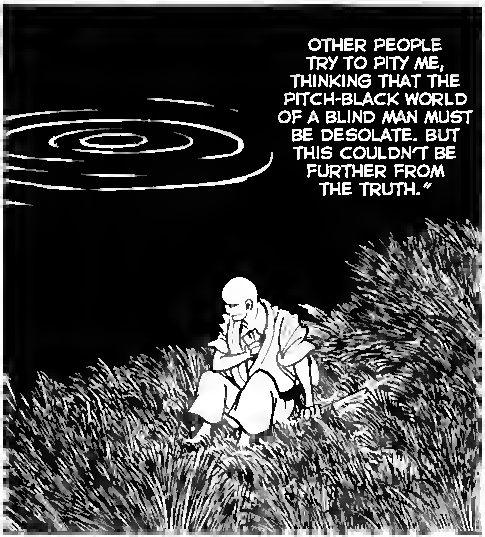

YES, FOR MY EARS ARE MANY TIMES AS SENSITIVE AS A SEEING MAN... SO SENSITIVE THAT I CAN EVEN HEAR A THUNDERHEAD FORMING


AND BEFORE LONG... THAT MOMENT OF PEACE AND QUIET BEFORE THE NOISELESS SOUND COMES.
RIGHT BEFORE THE EXPLOSION OF THE NOISE OF DUSK. I SUPPOSE I COULD CALL IT THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM...
ピシャ

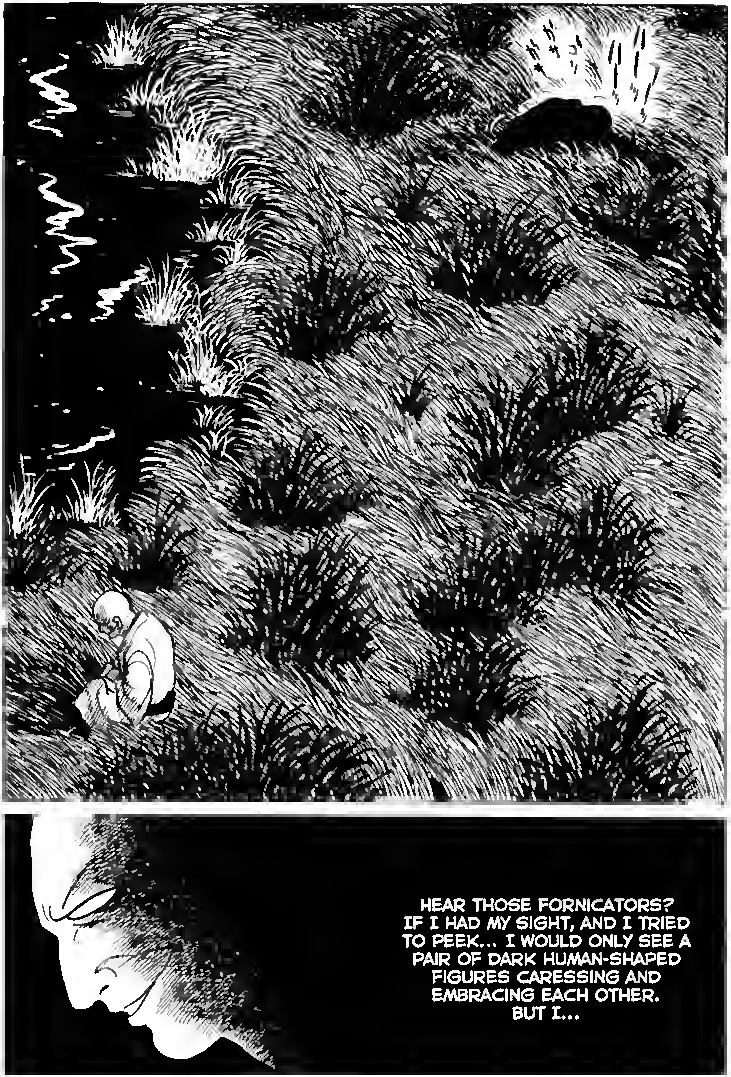


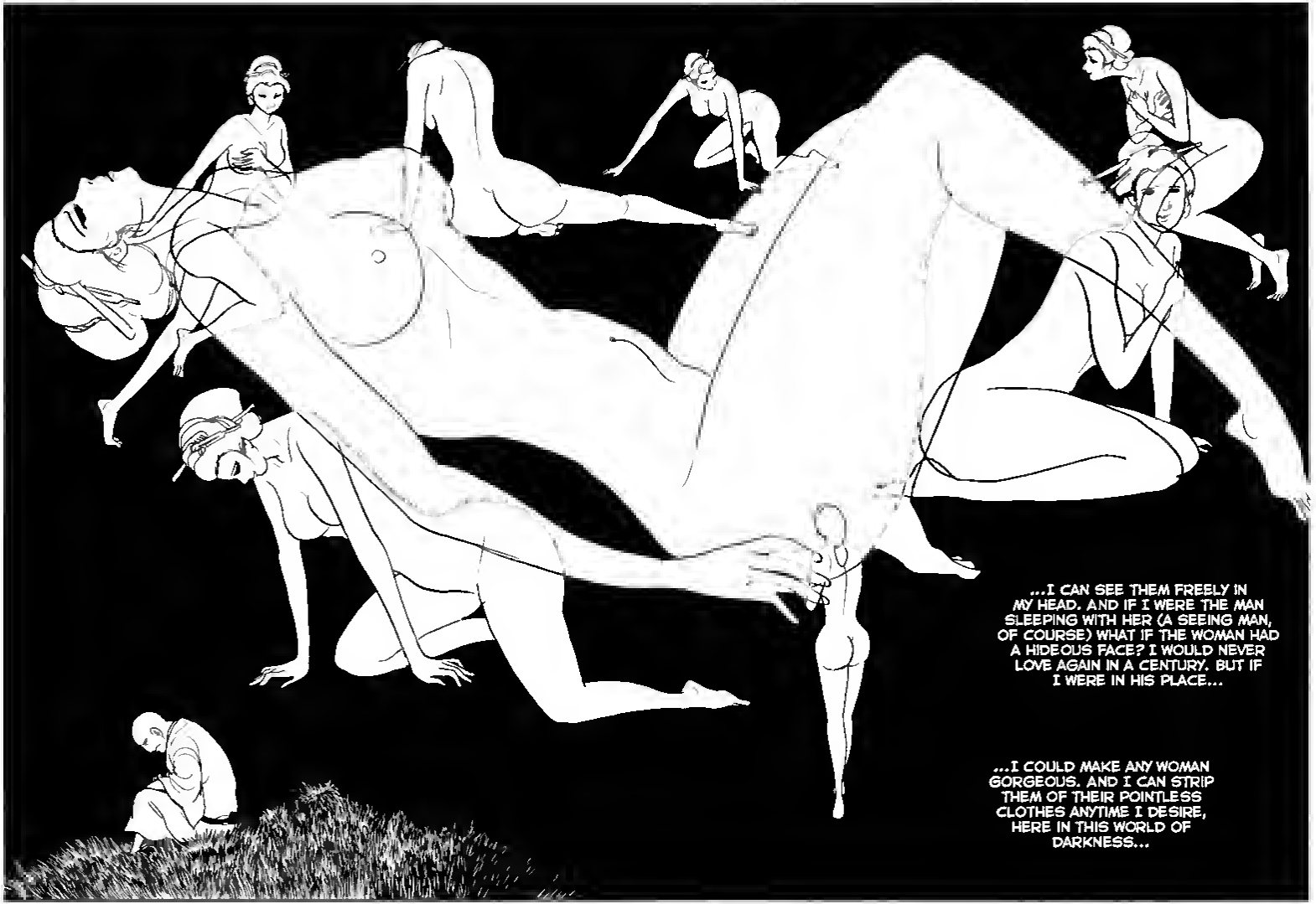


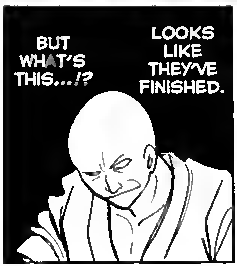



OTHER PEOPLE TRY TO PITY ME, THINKING THAT THE PITCH-BLACK WORLD OF A BLIND MAN MUST BE DESOLATE. BUT THIS COULDN'T BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH."

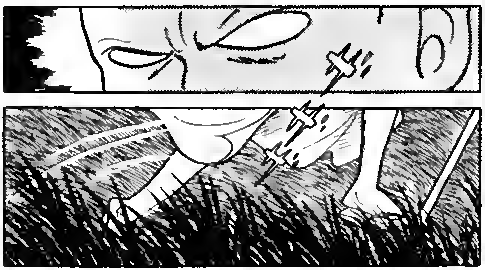
IT'S INCREDIBLY BOISTEROUS, LIVELY, AND DAZZLING. IT MAY NOT BE THE SAME AS THE VISUAL WORLD OF A SEEING MAN, BUT IT'S A WORLD THAT SEEING PEOPLE CANNOT SEE.


HEAR THOSE FORNICATORS? IF I HAD MY SIGHT, AND I TRIED TO PEEK... I WOULD ONLY SEE A PAIR OF DARK HUMAN-SHAPED FIGURES CARESSING AND EMBRACING EACH OTHER. BUT I...

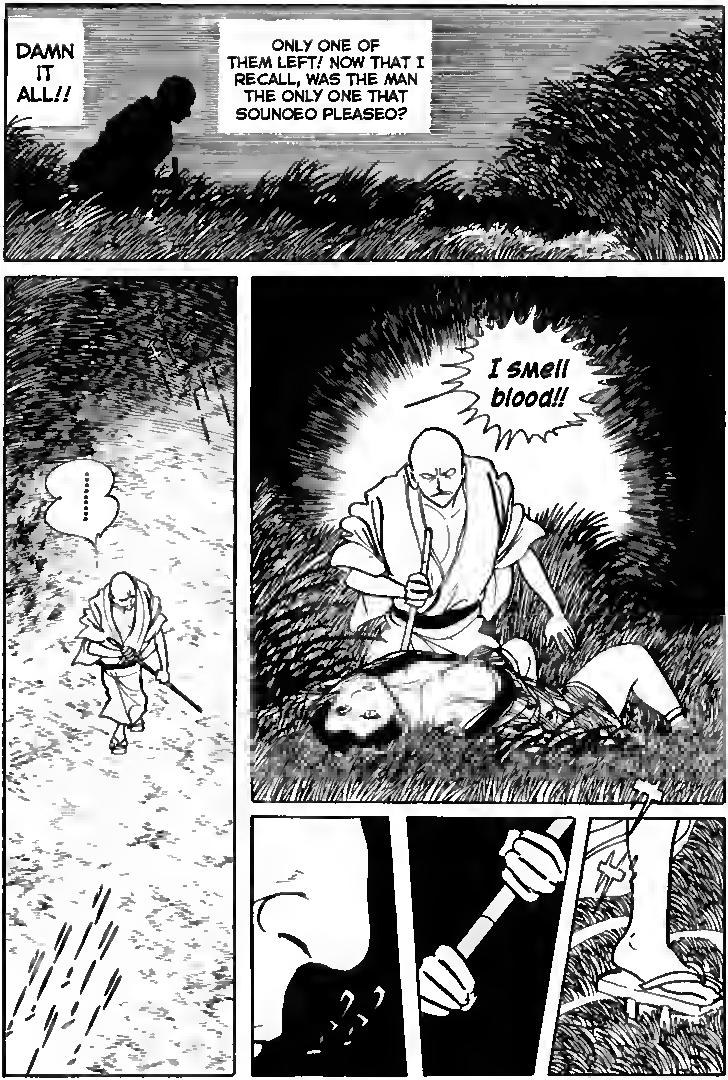

...I CAN SEE THEM FREELY IN MY HEAD. AND IF I WERE THE MAN SLEEPING WITH HER (A SEEING MAN, OF COURSE) WHAT IF THE WOMAN HAD A HIDEOUS FACE? I WOULD NEVER LOVE AGAIN IN A CENTURY. BUT IF I WERE IN HIS PLACE...
...I COULD MAKE ANY WOMAN GORGEOUS. AND I CAN STRIP THEM OF THEIR POINTLESS CLOTHES ANYTIME I DESIRE, HERE IN THIS WORLD OF DARKNESS...


BUT WHAT'S THIS...!?
LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE FINISHED.

ペペペ



YES, THE BLIND MAN'S WORLD OF DARKNESS IS FAR MORE FREE AND GORGEOUS THAN THE SEEING MAN'S LIMITED WORLD OF VISION.


DAMN IT ALL!!
ONLY ONE OF THEM LEFT! NOW THAT I RECALL, WAS THE MAN THE ONLY ONE THAT SOUNDED PLEASED?
.....
I smell blood!!

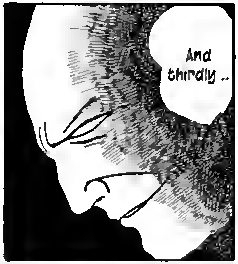
Ichi, I... Might end up having to take you in.
Huh?
...Truth is, this wasn't the first victim.
There's been about three or four since the rain let up.
Young girls, all about the same age as this one, who've been raped...
and then stabbed to death...
.....

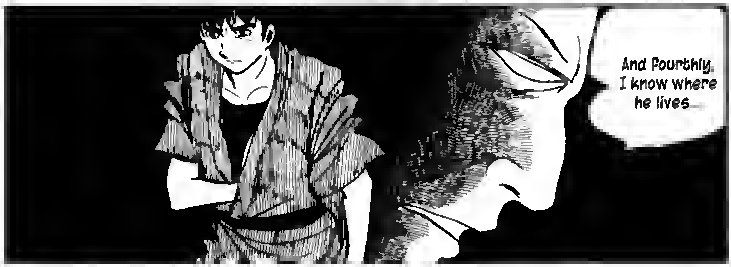
the perpetrator wore a white garment and had bald head... carried a sword-cane... and he was blind!
and from what she said,
but we did manage to find one of them while she was still alive...
First off, he isn't blind
By the way, did you manage to catch the fleeing man's appearance... well, I guess you can't... but do you have any guesses?
I must say, there are some flippant people out there.
I can't catch his appearance...? Not true at all, Sabu.
Hmpf.
Hmm?
And if he was blind... he wouldn't have run like that
but he would at least have remembered the sound of my breath
If he was blind... he would've noticed me with the lack of bug calls, and he would've remembered my heartbeat... well, I shouldn't go that far...
If he were blind, he would've easily noticed that I was right there

Which means he's definitely single.
If he had a wife and children, odds are... they wouldn't put up with that stench.
Secondly... He hasn't taken a bath in about half a year.
He was giving off a foul odor that made my nose turn up.

When you're bald, a clean-shaven head of hair tied in a topknot... may be hard to pool most people, but loose and dishevelled hair...
He smelled of indigo paper and medium refined oil.
He was wearing a wig of unkempt hair...!
Huh!?

So if we look around for single men who loathe baths around the area...
I see.

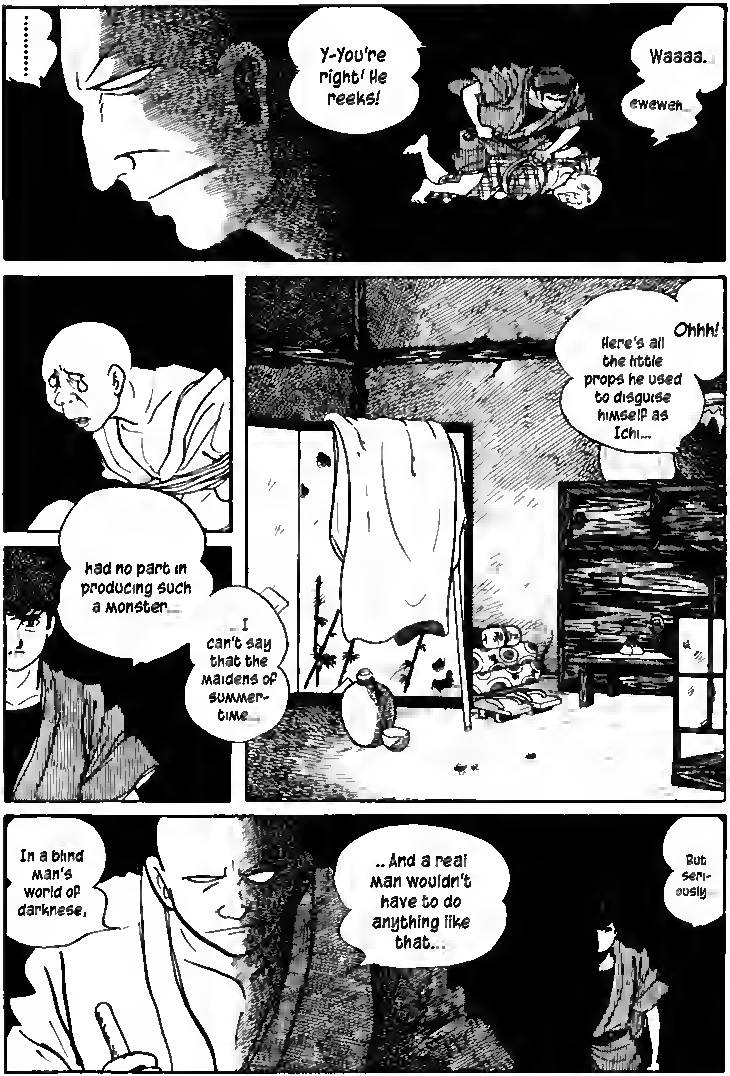

And thirdly...


And fourthly, I know where he lives...

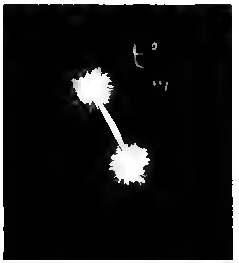
...He was drenched to the bone with the miasma of the Ohagoro ditch...!!
...

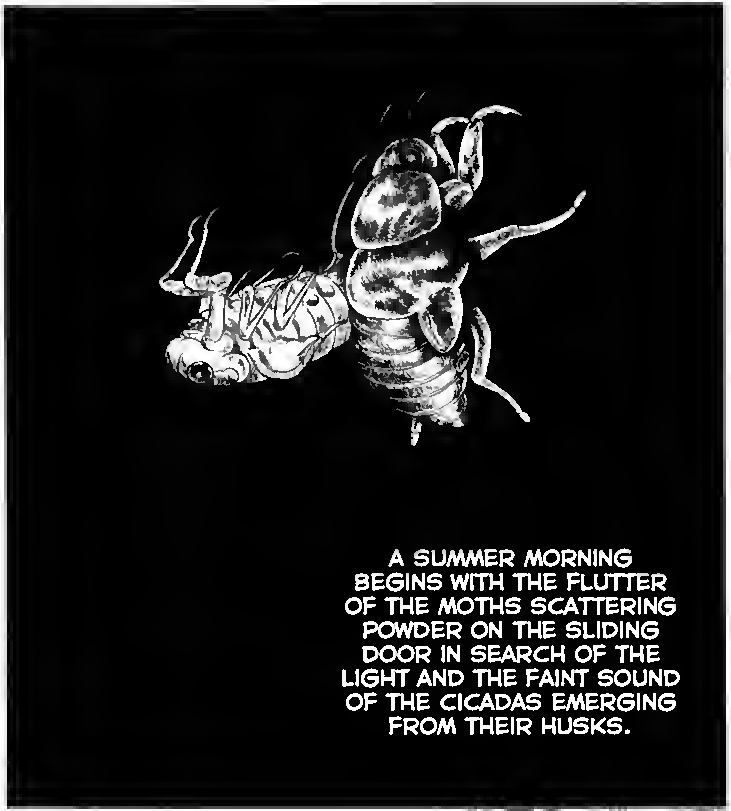
Eek!!
You bastard!!
I-I thought that I could get closer to women in that appearance... without being suspicious...
I-I didn't imitate your appearance out of spite at all!!!
S... S-Spare me! Please forgive me!!
YOU IDIOT!!

How could you kill young maidens not out of malice!?
I...I fell ill with a fever... w-which caused all my hair to fall out!
T-Then women stopped giving me the time of day...
.....


.....
Y-You're right! He reeks!
Waaaa..
ewewe..
Ohhh!
Here's all the little props he used to disguise himself as Ichi...
had no part in producing such a monster...
I can't say that the maidens of summer-time...
In a blind man's world of darkness,
..And a real man wouldn't have to do anything like that...
But seri-ously..

...There are far too many other fun things to do...!!




A SUMMER MORNING
BEGINS WITH THE FLUTTER
OF THE MOTHS SCATTERING
POWDER ON THE SLIDING
DOOR IN SEARCH OF THE
LIGHT AND THE FAINT SOUND
OF THE CICADAS EMERGING
FROM THEIR HUSKS.

July 1971 "Sound of Summer" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 44
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
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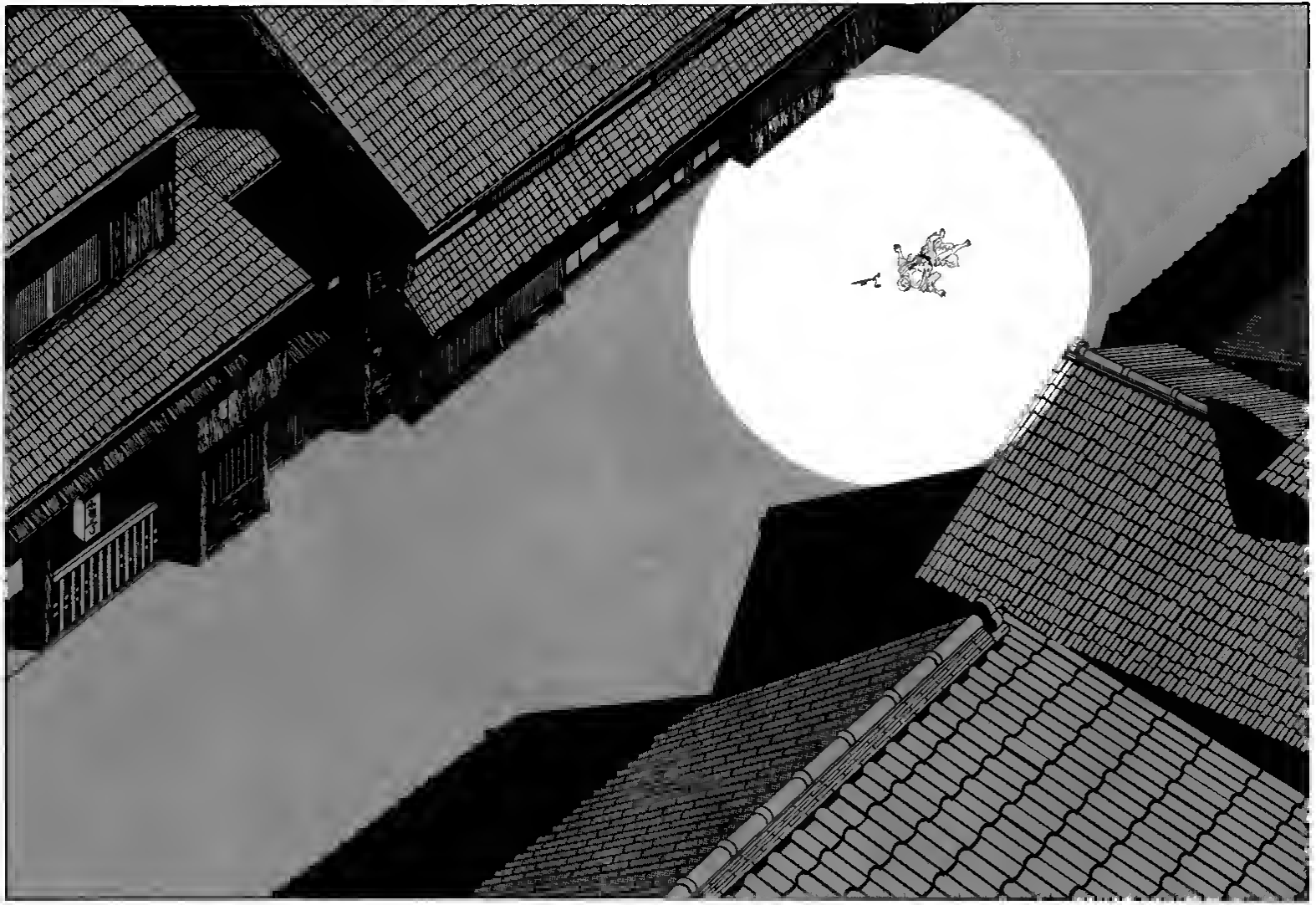
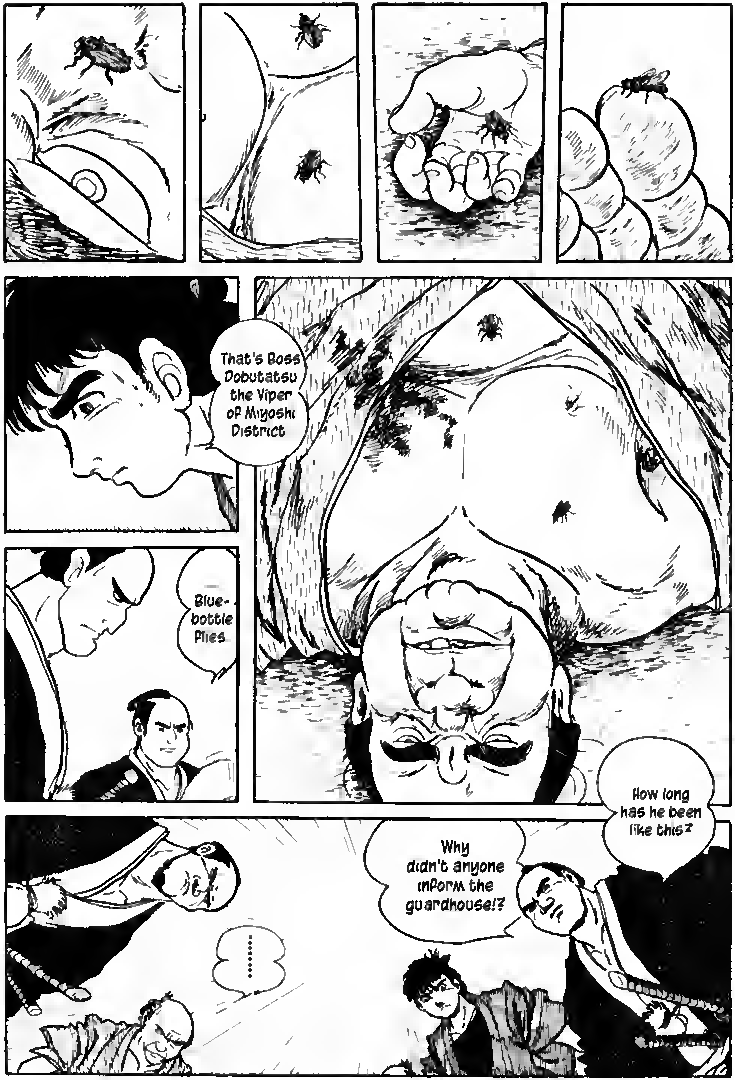
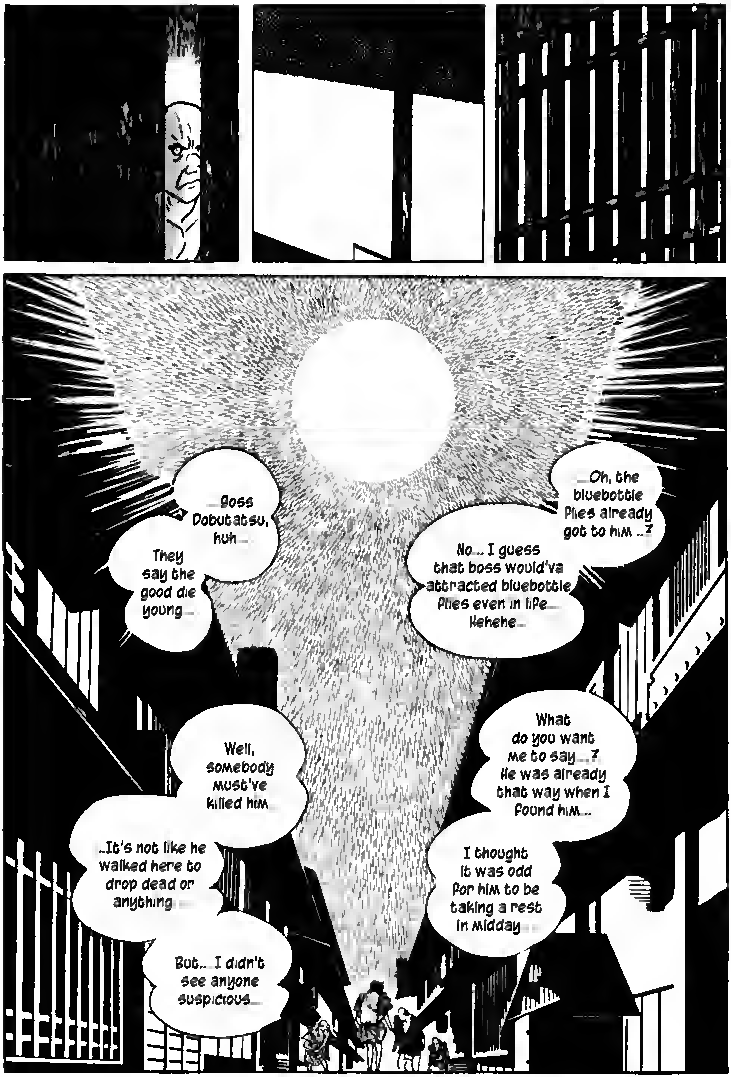
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHÔTARÔ

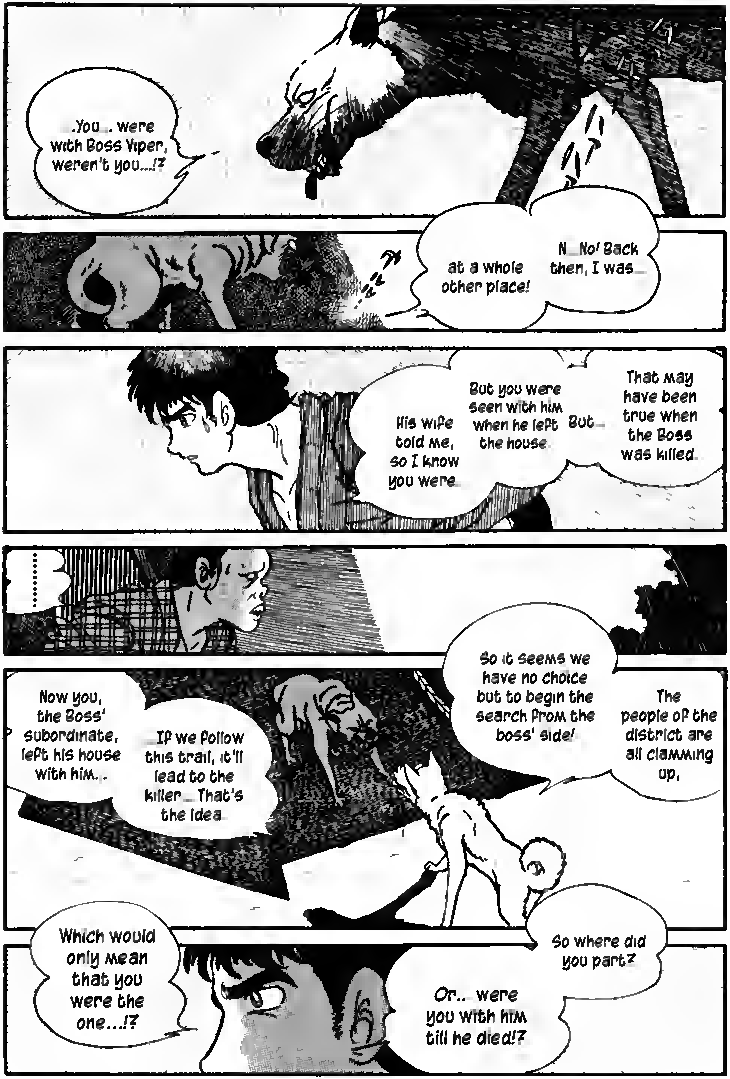
Chapter 45: Death of the Blazing Sun

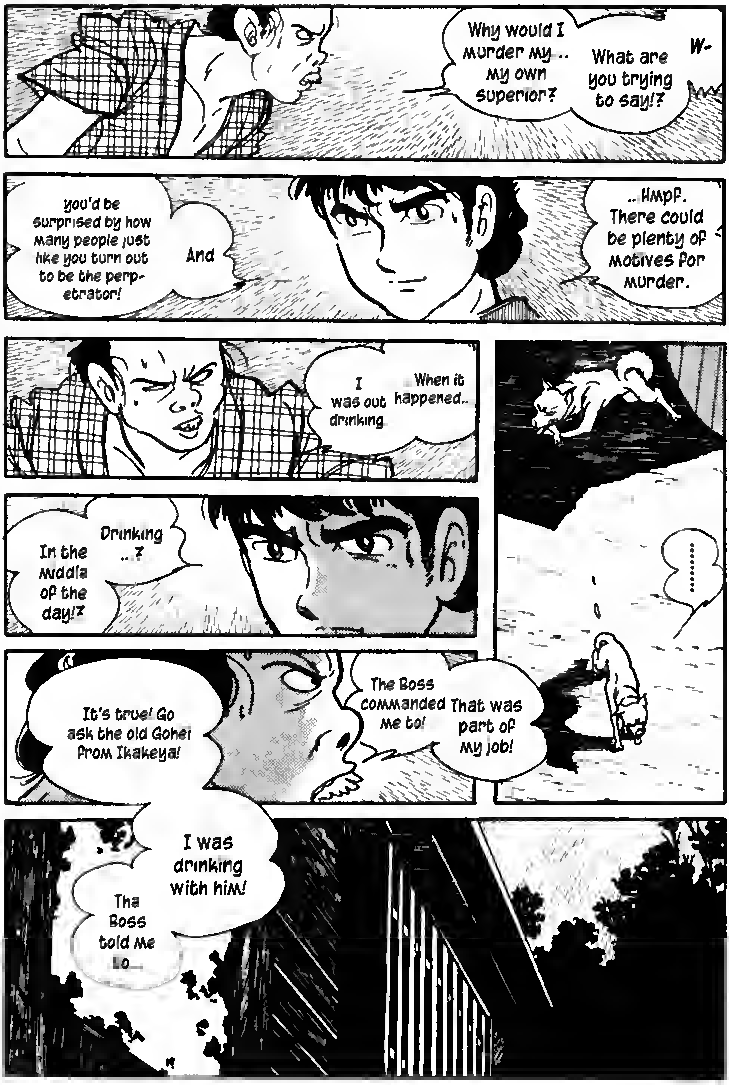



That's Boss Dobutatsu the Viper of Miyoshi District
Blue-bottle Flies
How long has he been like this?
Why didn't anyone inform the guardhouse!?
.....


Boss Dobutatsu, huh...
They say the good die young...
Well, somebody must've killed him...
...It's not like he walked here to drop dead or anything...
But... I didn't see anyone suspicious...
...Oh, the bluebottle flies already got to him...?
No... I guess that boss would've attracted bluebottle flies even in life... Hehehe...
What do you want me to say...? He was already that way when I found him...
I thought it was odd for him to be taking a rest in midday...

It's like they're all thrilled to see Boss Dobutatsu go!
Every single damn one of them seems to be hiding something that they know about this!
What could be going on with the people of this district!?
.....
Dobutatsu was unliked...!
No doubt about it!

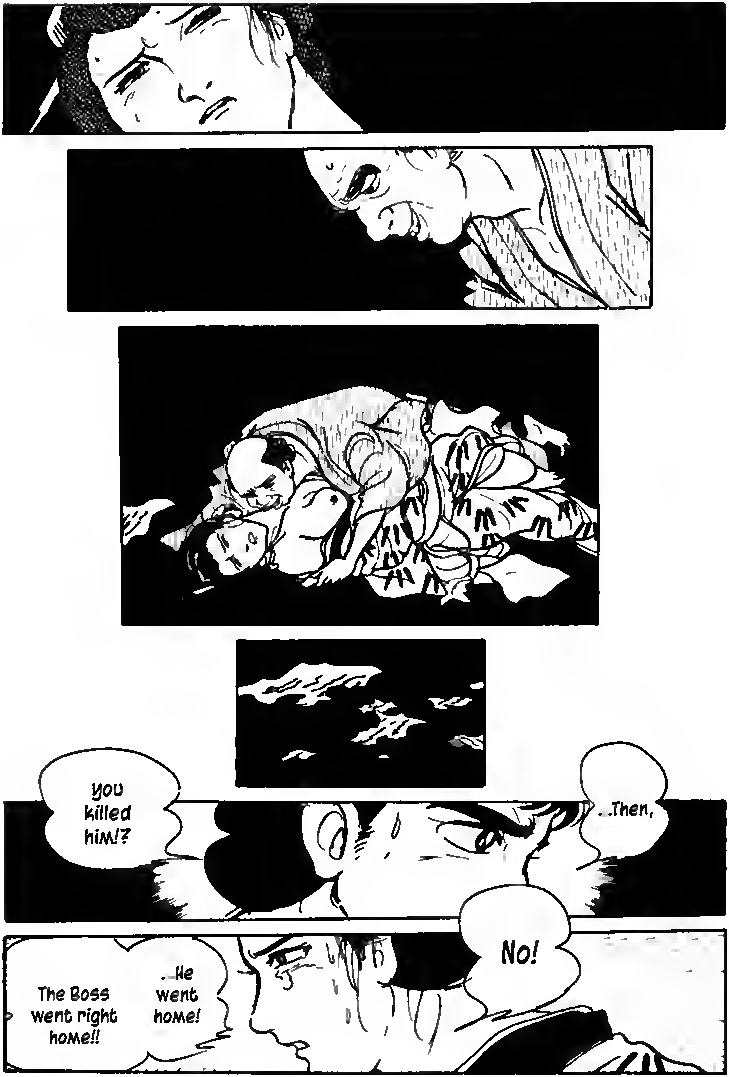

...You... were with Boss Viper, weren't you...!?
N...No! Back then, I was... at a whole other place!
That may have been true when the Boss was killed...
But you were seen with him when he left the house... But... His wife told me, so I know you were...
The people of the district are all clamming up.
So it seems we have no choice but to begin the search from the boss' side!
Now you, the Boss' subordinate, left his house with him...
...If we follow this trail, it'll lead to the killer... That's the idea.
So where did you part?
Which would only mean that you were the one...!?
Or... were you with him till he died!?


W-
What are you trying to say!?
Why would I murder my .. my own superior?
..Hmpf. There could be plenty of motives for murder.
And
you'd be surprised by how many people just like you turn out to be the perpetrator!
When it happened..
I was out drinking
Drinking ...?
In the middle of the day!?
That was part of my job!
The Boss commanded me to!
It's true! Go ask the old Gohei from Ikakeya!
I was drinking with him!
The Boss told me to...

Actually, I should probably say morning..
right before noon.
..Yes, the Boss did come here ..
Viper .. had told his subordinate Ratsnake to drag your father along..
He just ... went home?
..But he left to go home right away.
And you alone
..And yet you say he went home... So what kind of business did he have!?
..Which means the Boss.. had some business with you.

That I killed the Boss...!?
What do you want me to say!?
W-What are you getting at!?
But... probably not.
I don't think the Boss was killed by a woman.
IF this was the last place the Boss walked to on his own feet, it's possible.
...It could be that.
...I have to know.
This may not have been what Ratsnake said... but it's my job!
All I want is to know the truth
The truth!
T-Then tell me! What do you want!?
Sob...
Sniff, sniff...

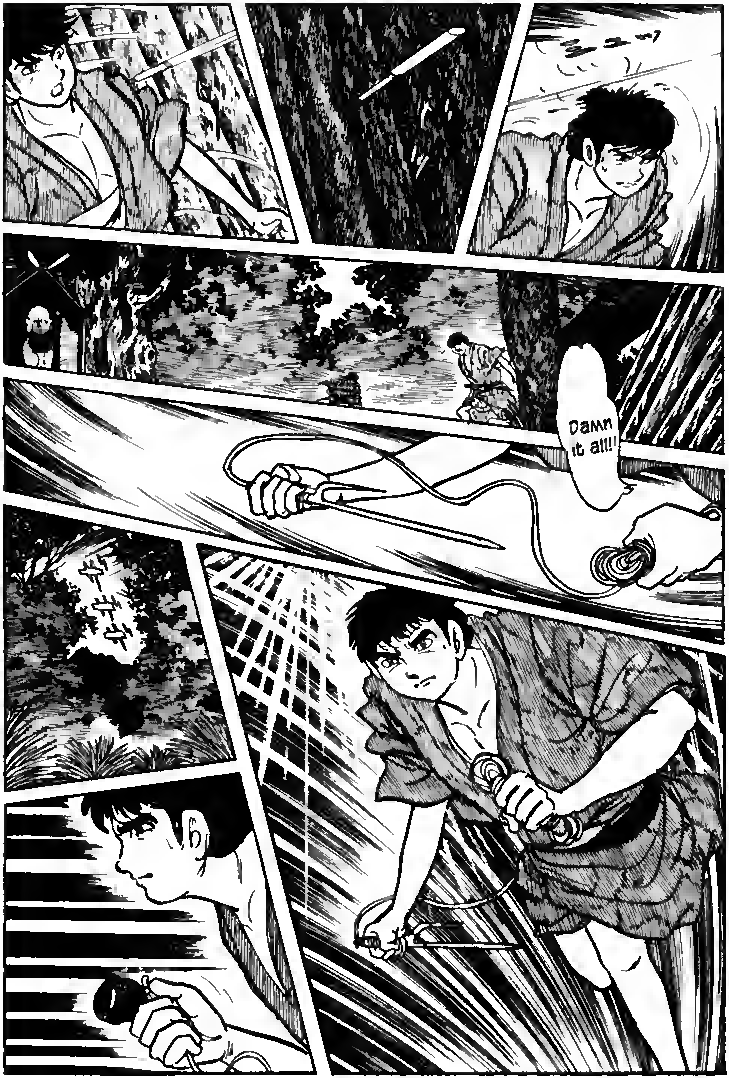
I-If only you didn't borrow money from the Boss to go drinking, this would never have...!!
I...If only you didn't drink so damn much, Father!
Auuugh...
...F-Father!
Father!!
.....
Then... H...He waved the deed in My face...
W-With My body!
...The Boss told me to pay Father's debt...


You killed him!?
..Then,
No!
The Boss went right home!!
..He went home!

ヒグ
.. Heh...
Hehehe...

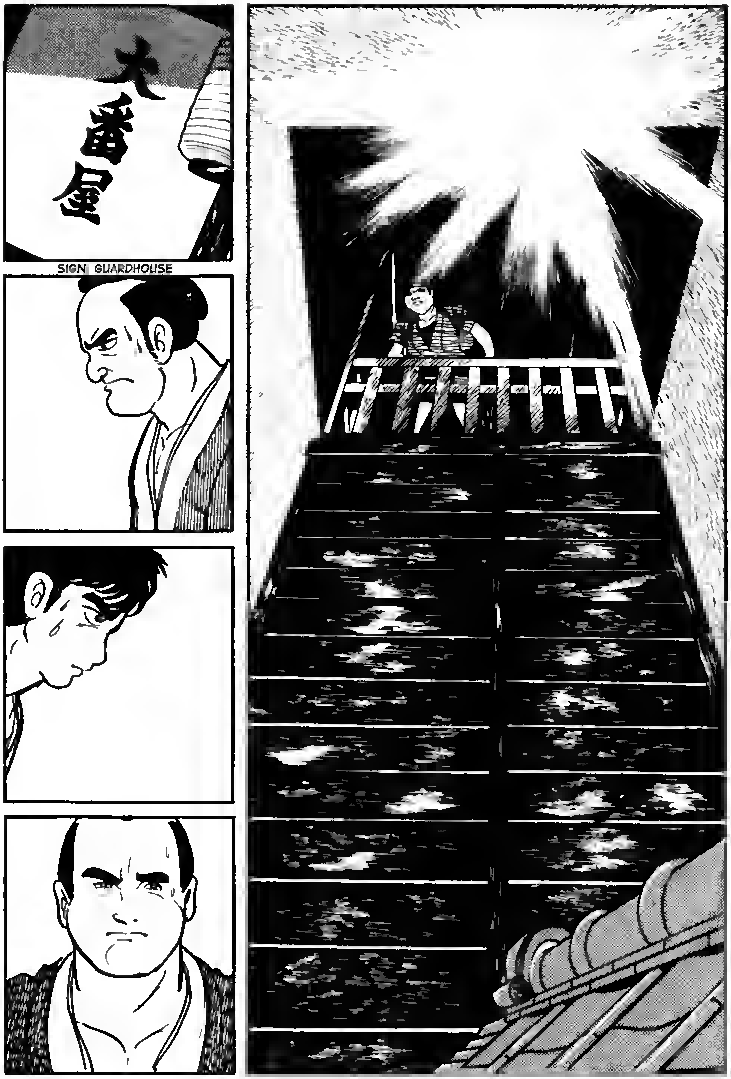
.....
Eheh..
Hehe-hehe...
I thought I told you everything!
...What the hell..?
Sorry, but I have one more thing to ask you.

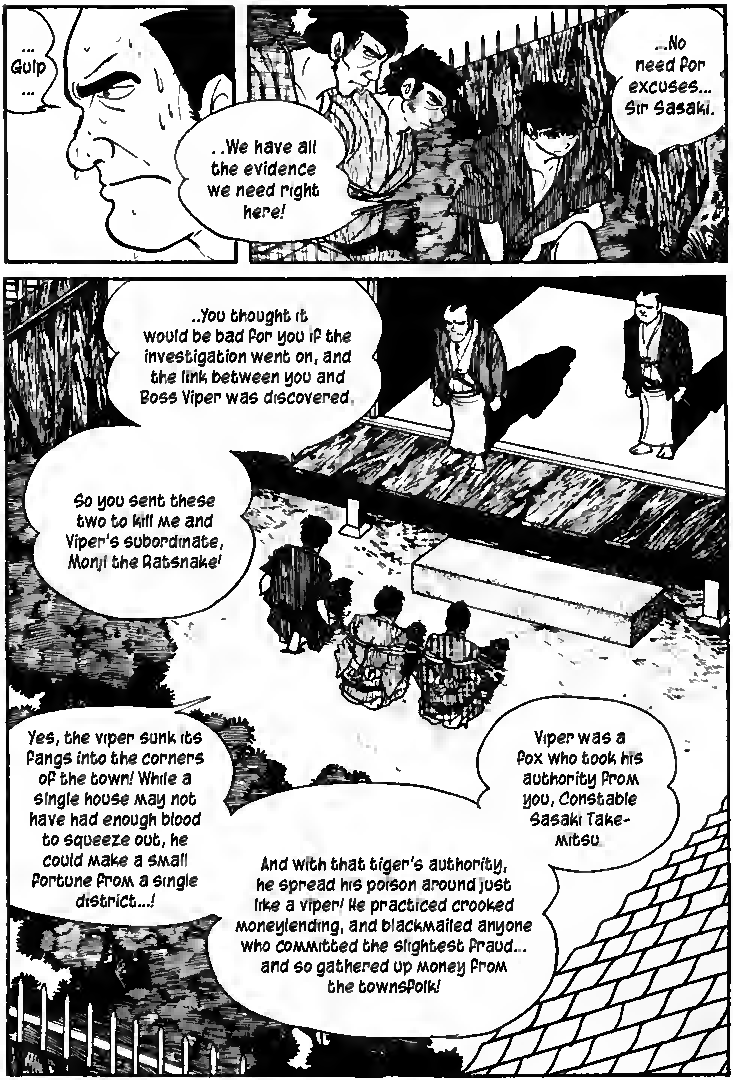
...Huh ...!?
So I thought I'd pick up the trail from the Boss' side again...
It seems... the trail goes cold at Gohei's place...
..Kch..
Ahhh!?
Ahh!!

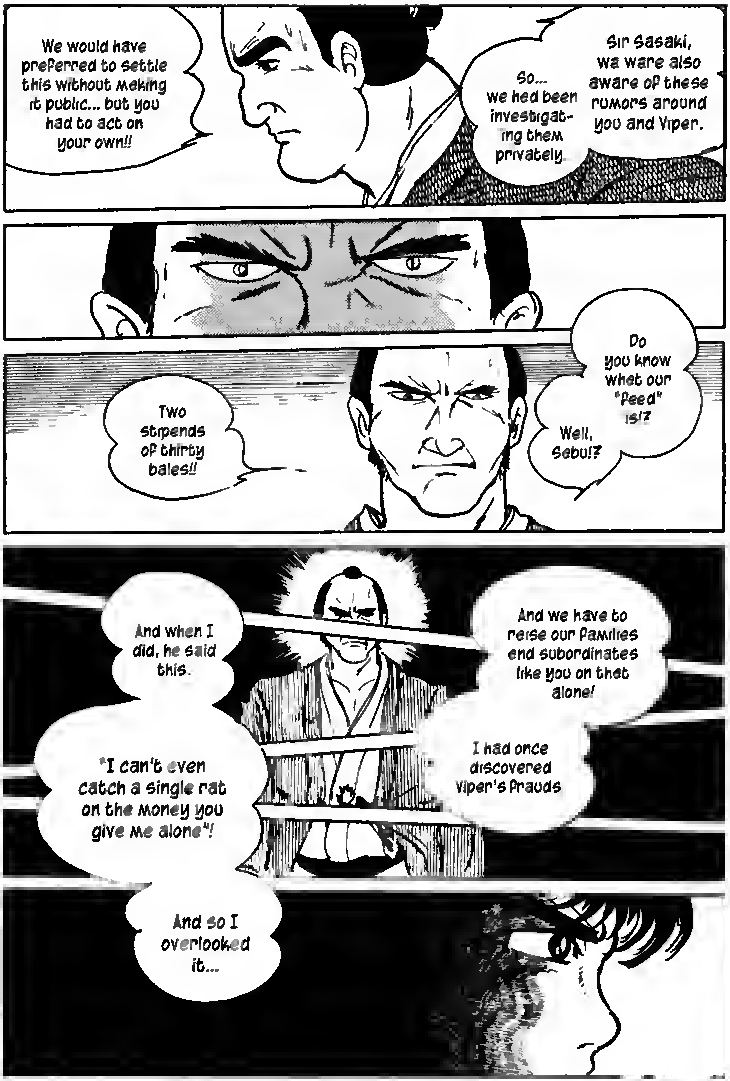

ヒュッ
Damn it all!!
ヤーヤ

Gah!
...Nngh!!
Hoh!?

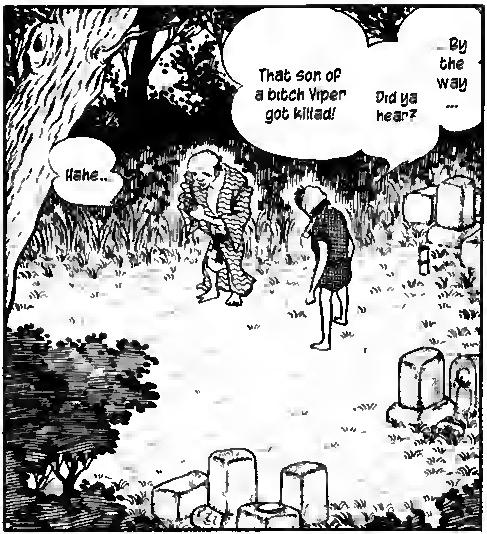
Waaaaugh!!
...N-Now, y...you're going to tell me everything!
If you don't... would you rather I make you never talk again?
Ug.. ggh..


大番所
SIGN: GUARDHOUSE


...Gulp...
..We have all the evidence we need right here!
...No need for excuses... Sir Sasaki.
..You thought it would be bad for you if the investigation went on, and the link between you and Boss Viper was discovered.
So you sent these two to kill me and Viper's subordinate, Monji the Ratsnake!
Yes, the viper sunk its fangs into the corners of the town! While a single house may not have had enough blood to squeeze out, he could make a small fortune from a single district...!
Viper was a fox who took his authority from you, Constable Sasaki Take-Mitsu.
And with that tiger's authority, he spread his poison around just like a viper! He practiced crooked moneylending, and blackmailed anyone who committed the slightest fraud... and so gathered up money from the townsfolk!


We would have preferred to settle this without making it public... but you had to act on your own!!
So... we had been investigating them privately.
Sir Sasaki, we were also aware of these rumors around you and Viper.
Do you know what our "feed" is!?
Well, Sebu!?
Two stipends of thirty bales!!
And when I did, he said this.
"I can't even catch a single rat on the money you give me alone"!
And we have to raise our families and subordinates like you on that alone!
I had once discovered Viper's frauds
And so I overlooked it...

Ooh!!
どすん
Ow, ow, ow...
H-Hey, are you alright... Ratty?
Are ya hurt...?
Hmm?


That son of a bitch viper got killed!
Did ya hear?
...By the way ...
Hehe...

I got a cicada right here for ya

Heh!
Ehaha...

So I came hurrying back here when I had heard someone had murdered him!
I'm sure you probably remember... but that bastard drove me out of town
When I heard it, it was like a load taken off my chest!

Hehehe...

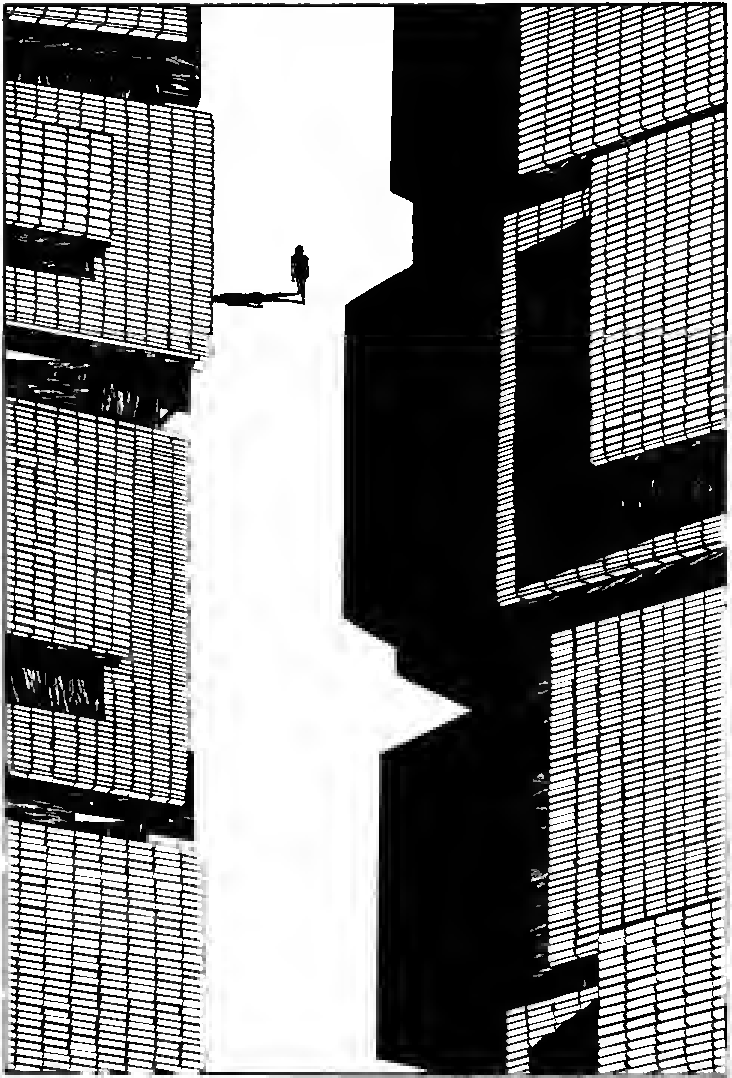
I really think whoever it is, he's a great, courageous man!!
I'd like to thank whoever killed the buggar!

Ehe..
Ehehe...
...Thank you so much...!
Hehe
This is quite the place
I just can't bear this damn heat!
...Hmm, but still, Ratty ..
Huh?
.. Ratty, did yer... Mom give you that?
Huh?

.....
Hahaha, or does that
that sash... belong to Tomi of Ikakeya?
Urrgh...
...And o' course, I heard that Boss Viper's been lookin' at her, too...
Everyone knows that you had a thing for Tomi.
...I knew it.
Heh!
Ehe... ehehehe..
That's why I killed him!
...Ahhh, that asshole was picking on Tomi!
It was you!!

You are all spineless cowards!
So... you all wanted to become the perpetrators!
You all wanted to kill him! Yes, I could even say your hatred killed Viper.
It was too terrifying for one man to take all the blame... because of your uneasy consciences!
You all covered up for this man, knowing what he'd done...

I understand how you feel.
Boss Viper may have had this coming to him.
But then why...
Why didn't you do something... before Viper started throwing his weight around?
I don't mean you should've killed him.
Murder, no matter how right it may seem, is still a crime.
But if you had any spine in you, you should've worked together to plan something you could've done!!



July 1971, "Death of the Blazing Sun" (FIN)

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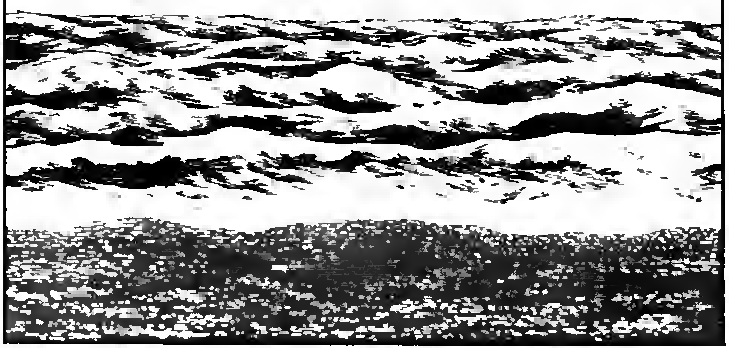
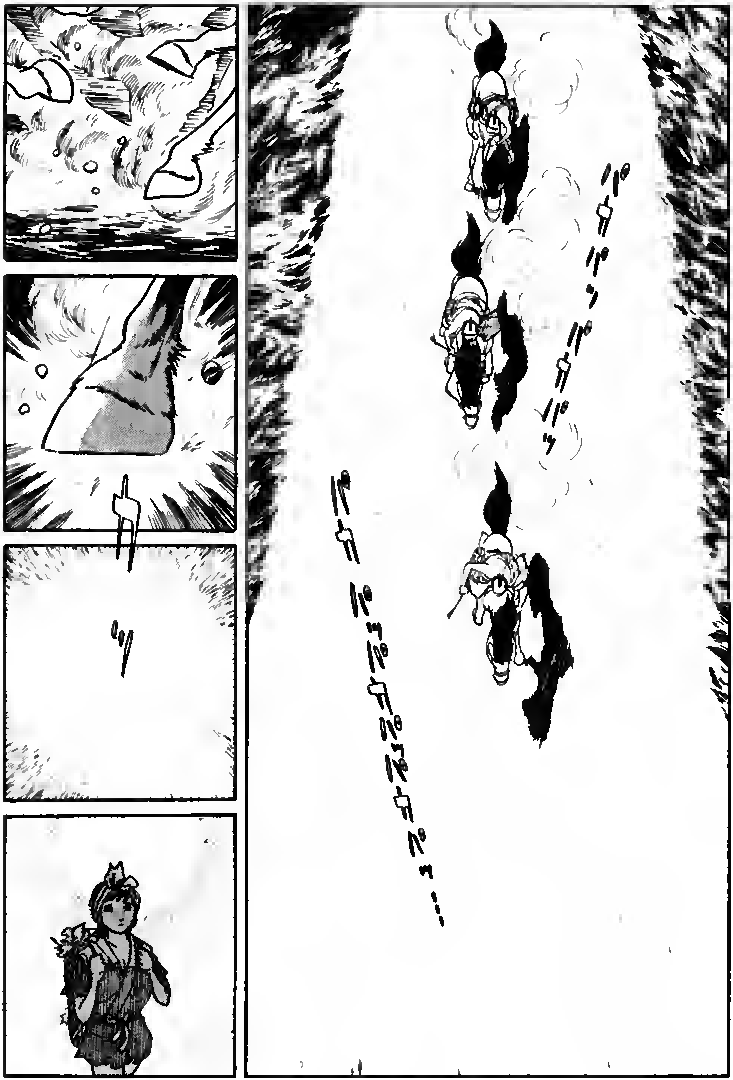
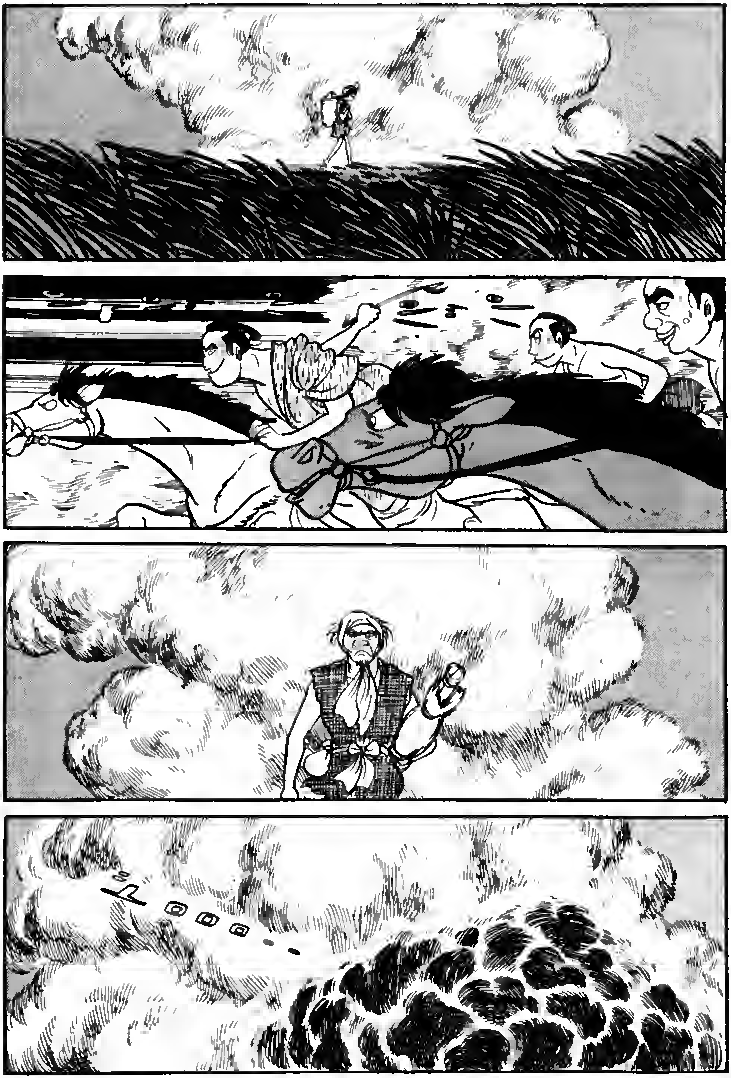
Chapter 46: Rumbling of the Sea

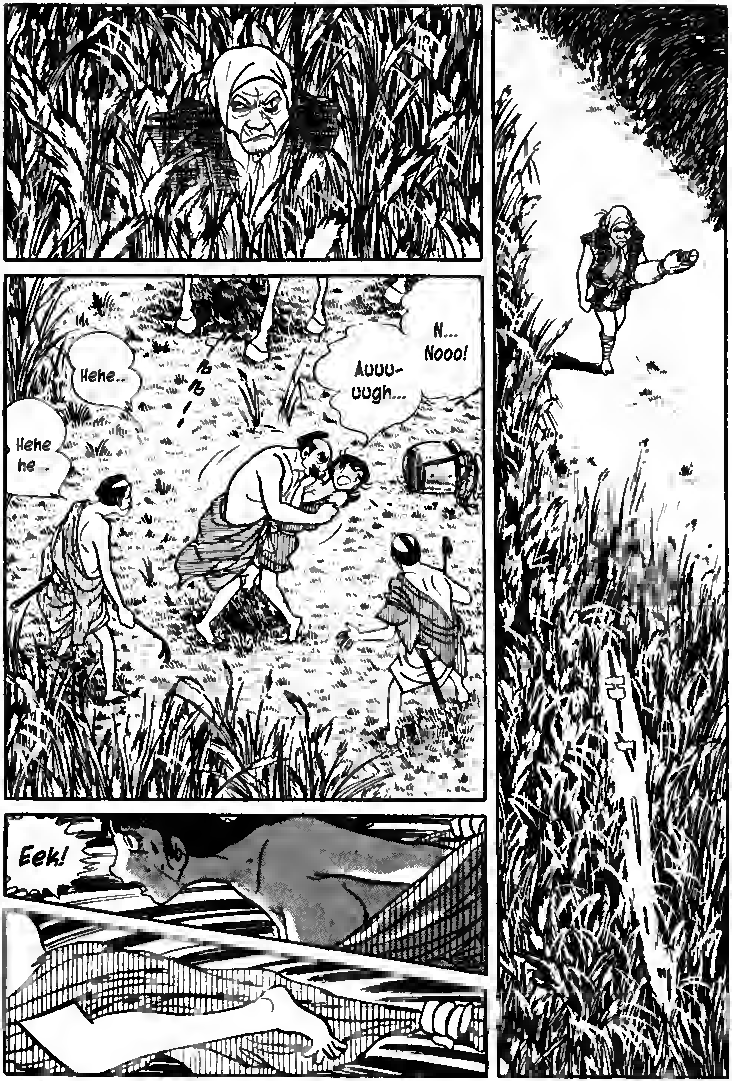
THE RUMBLING OF THE SEA –
THE SOUND OF THE WAVES CRASHING
AGAINST THE SHORE, LIKE DISTANT
THUNDER... WAS ALSO THE SOUND
OF THE REMAINING FOOTSTEPS.

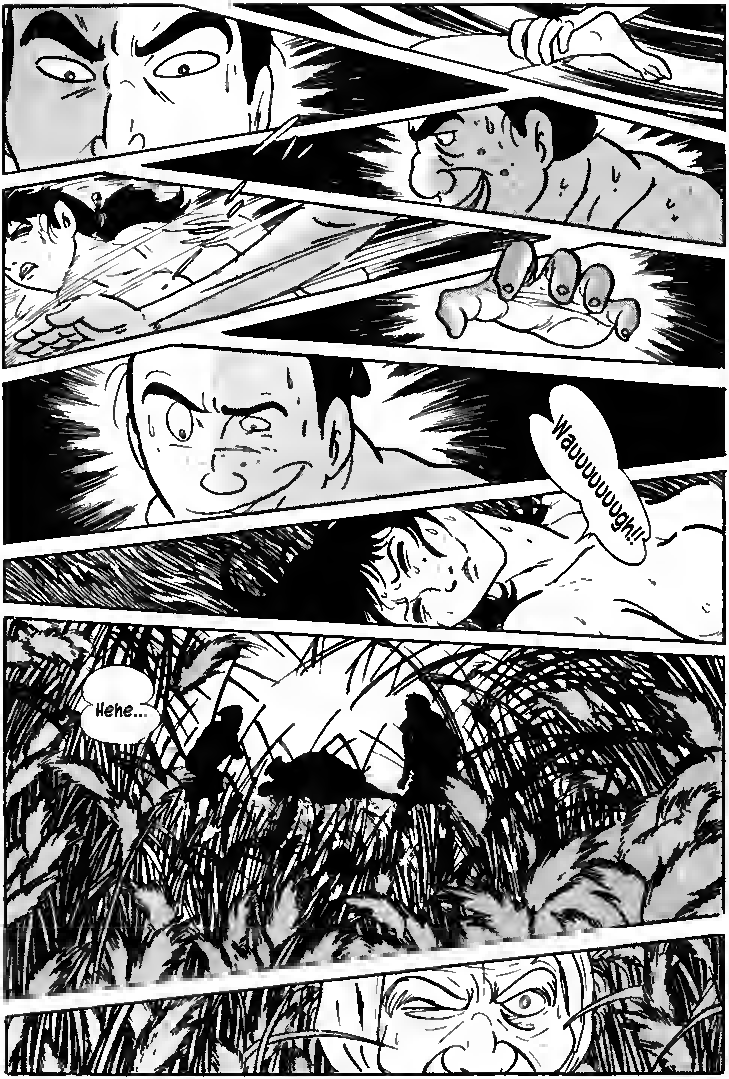




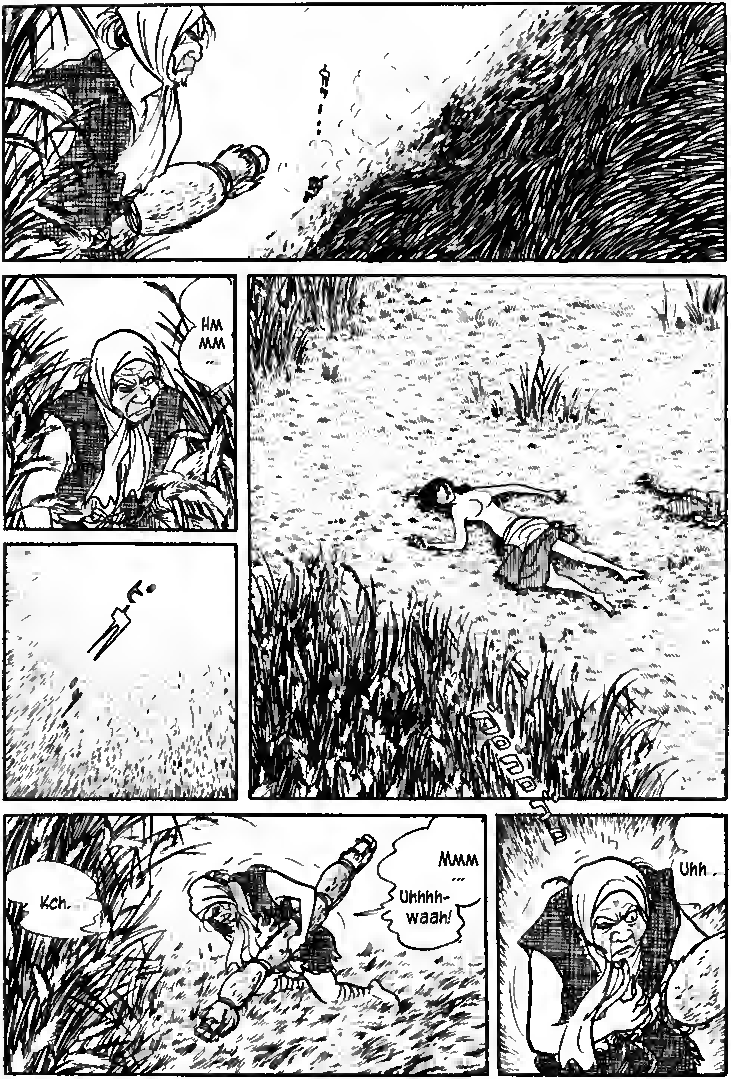

ヒョロロロ…

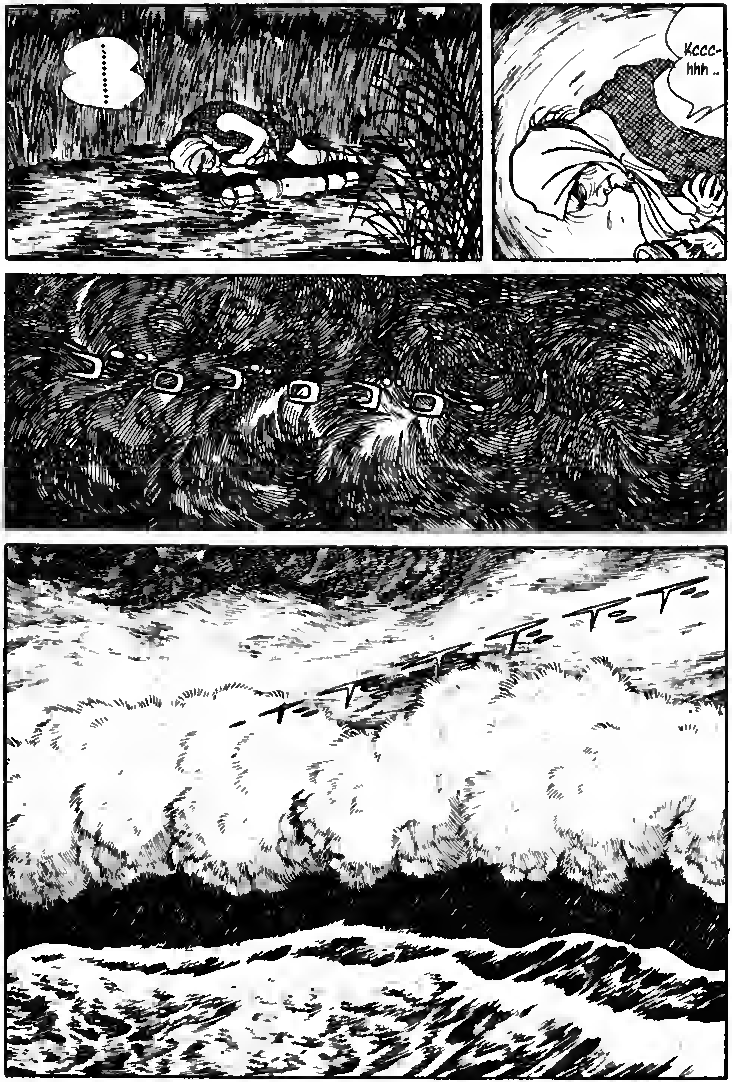
Aieee!!
Hehe he... he...
Hic... Ahhh..
Hehe he...

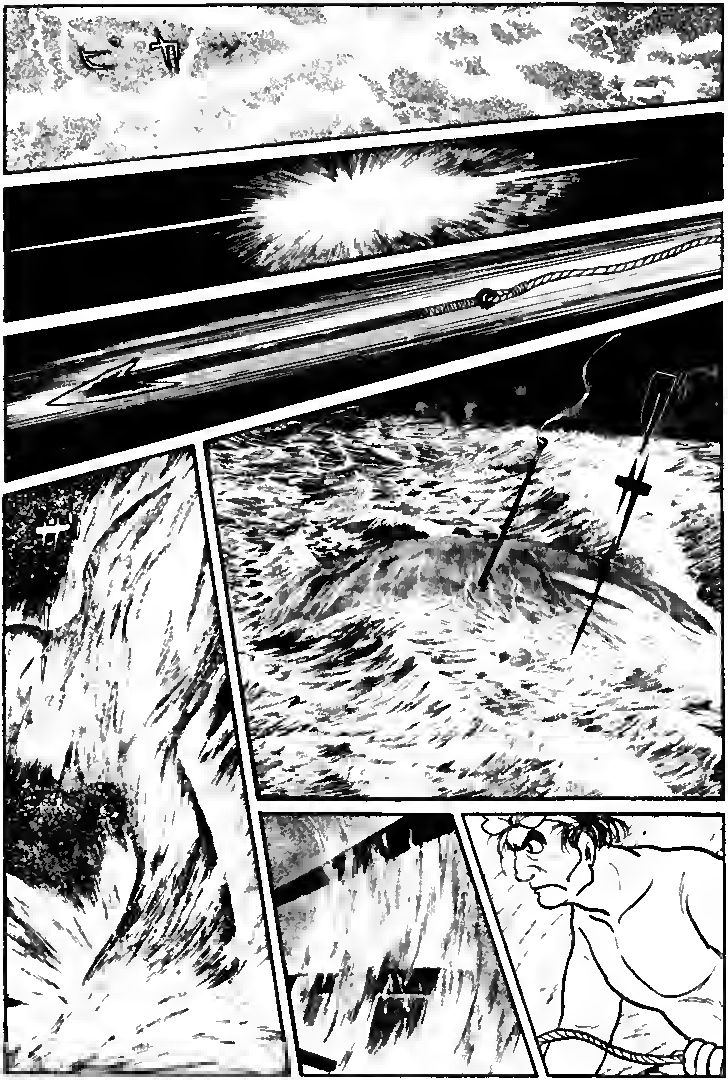

Hehe...
Hehe he...
ん ん !
N... Nooo!
Aaaa- augh...
Eek!


Wauuuuuugh!!
Hehe...

ヒヒーン
Ha ha ha!
Heh!


Hm mm
Mmm ...
Uhhhh-waah!
Kch.
Uhh.

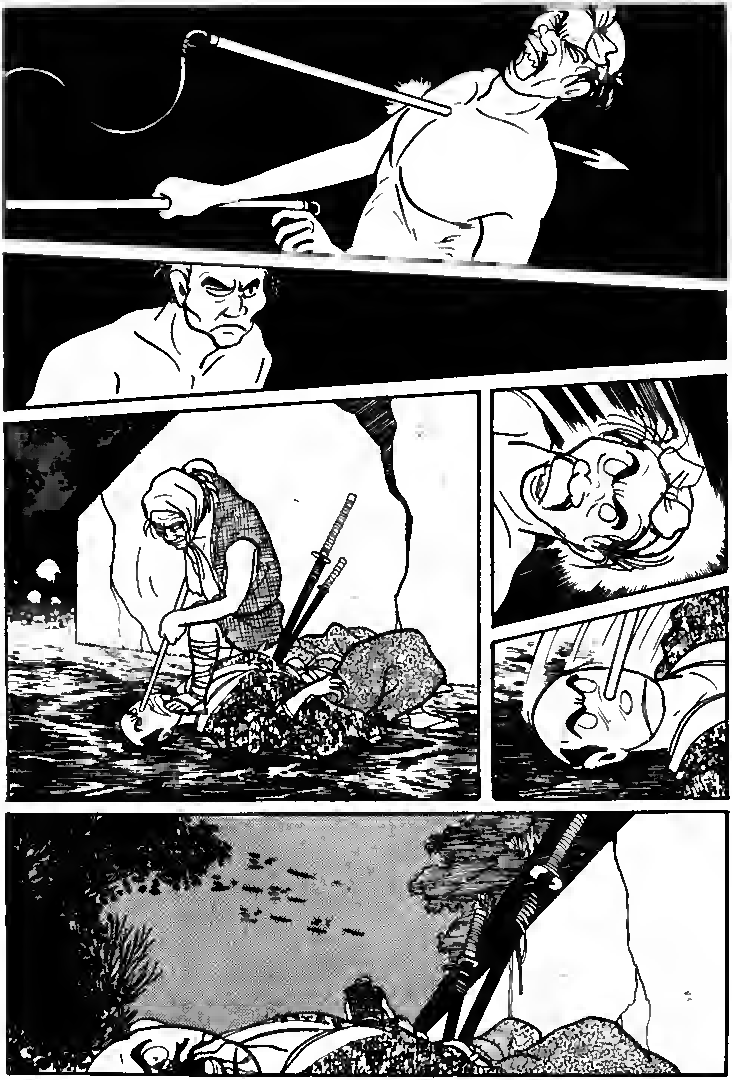

.....
Kccc-
hhh ..



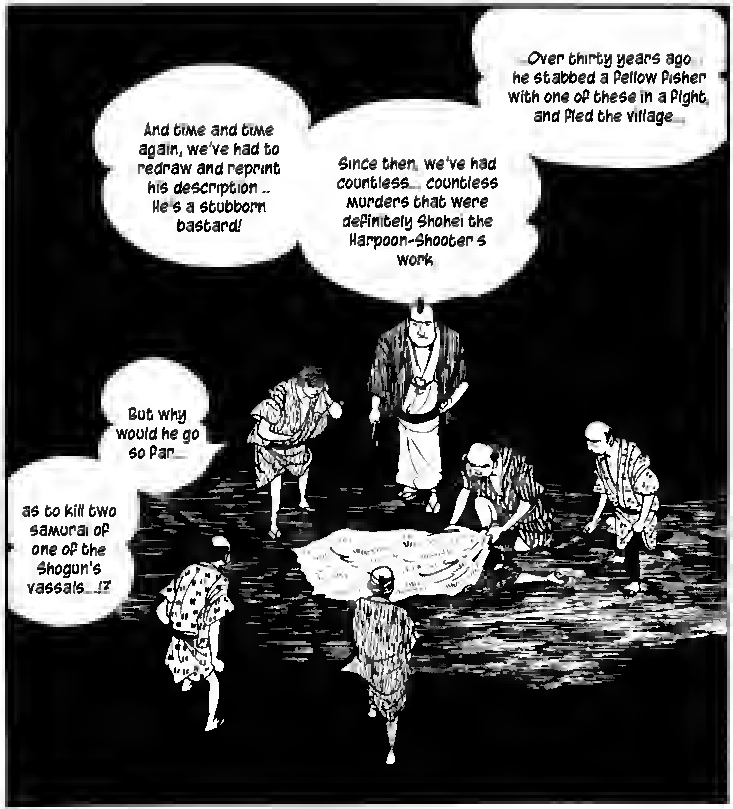
ザザザ

.....
Aaau-uaau-uaau-uohh..
Ahhhh..
Uuohh...
D-Don't cry!
Sob...
Toki... Toki... H-How terrible...
Don't cry. T-They were samurai...
There's nothing we can do but think of this as an act of god...!
A-Aa-augh...
Urk...

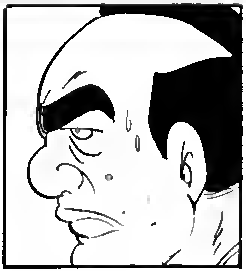
N...Now, let's go home at once!
We have to treat her.
Urrrgh...
Uhhh...

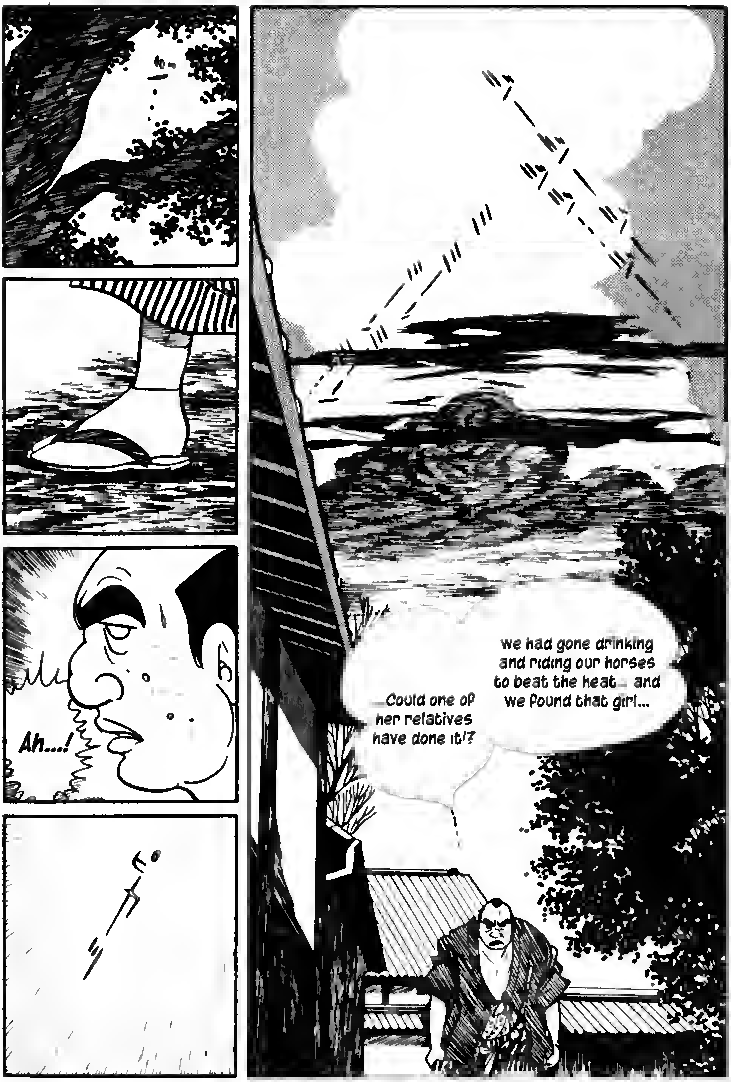


This modus operandi is Shohei the Harpoon-Shooter's

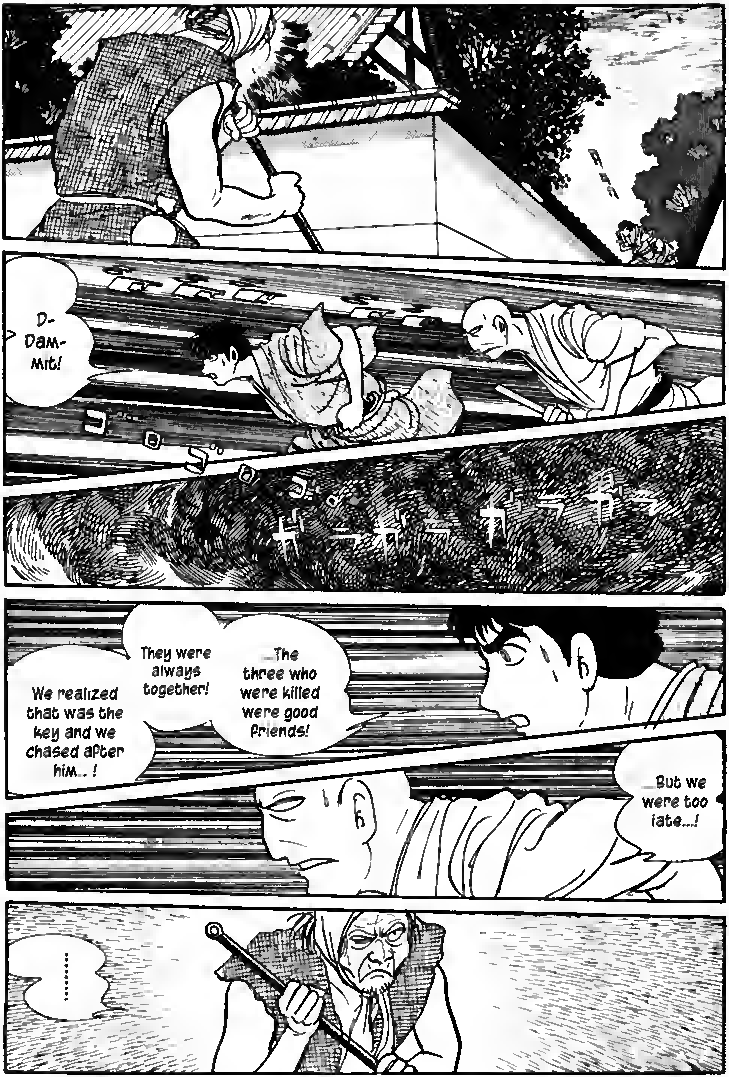

...Over thirty years ago he stabbed a Fellow Fisher with one of these in a Fight, and Fled the village...
Since then, we've had countless... countless murders that were definitely Shohei the Harpoon-Shooter's work
And time and time again, we've had to redraw and reprint his description... He's a stubborn bastard!
But why would he go so far...
as to kill two samurai of one of the Shogun's vassals...!?

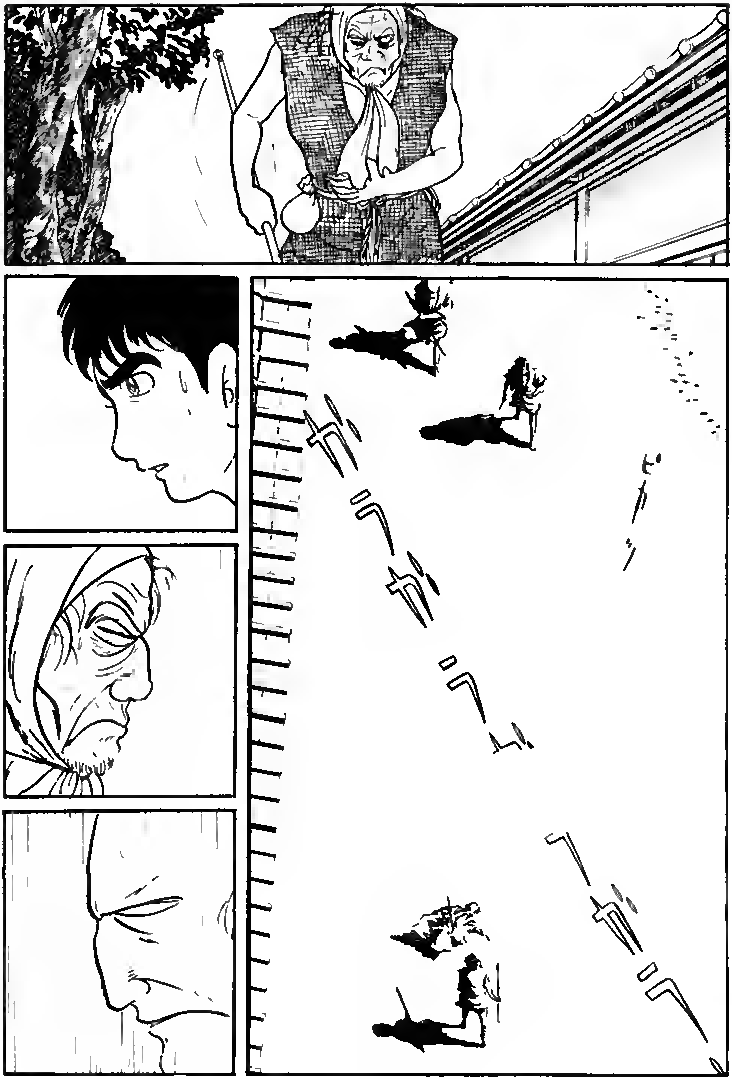
...That day,

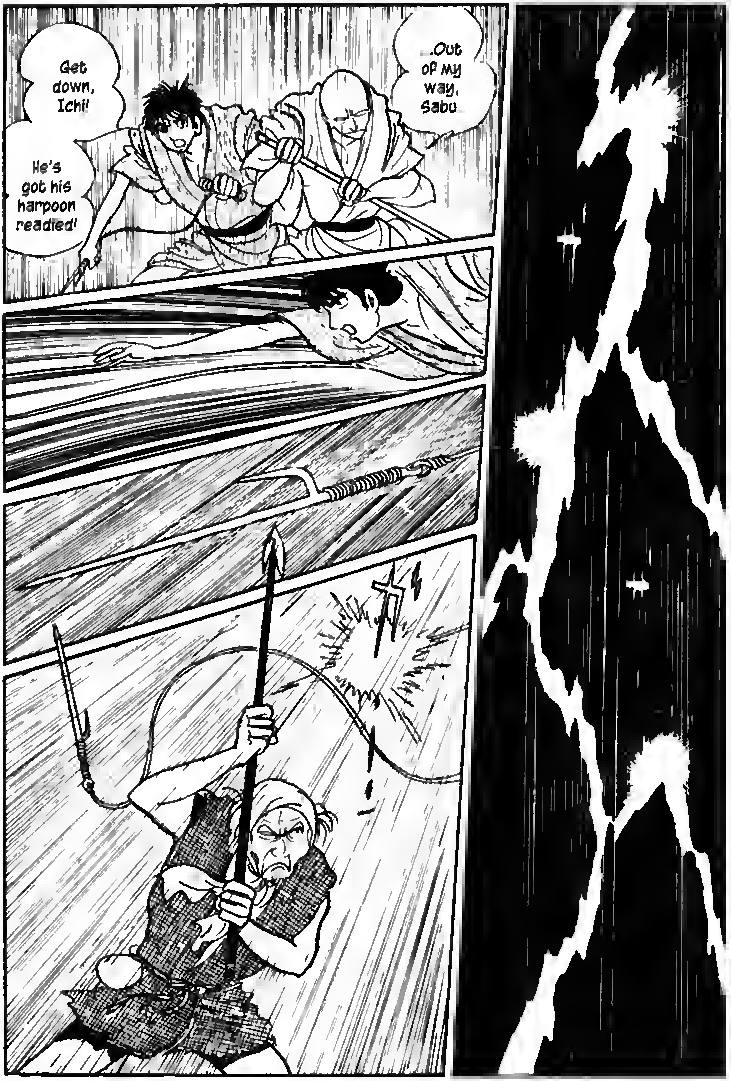


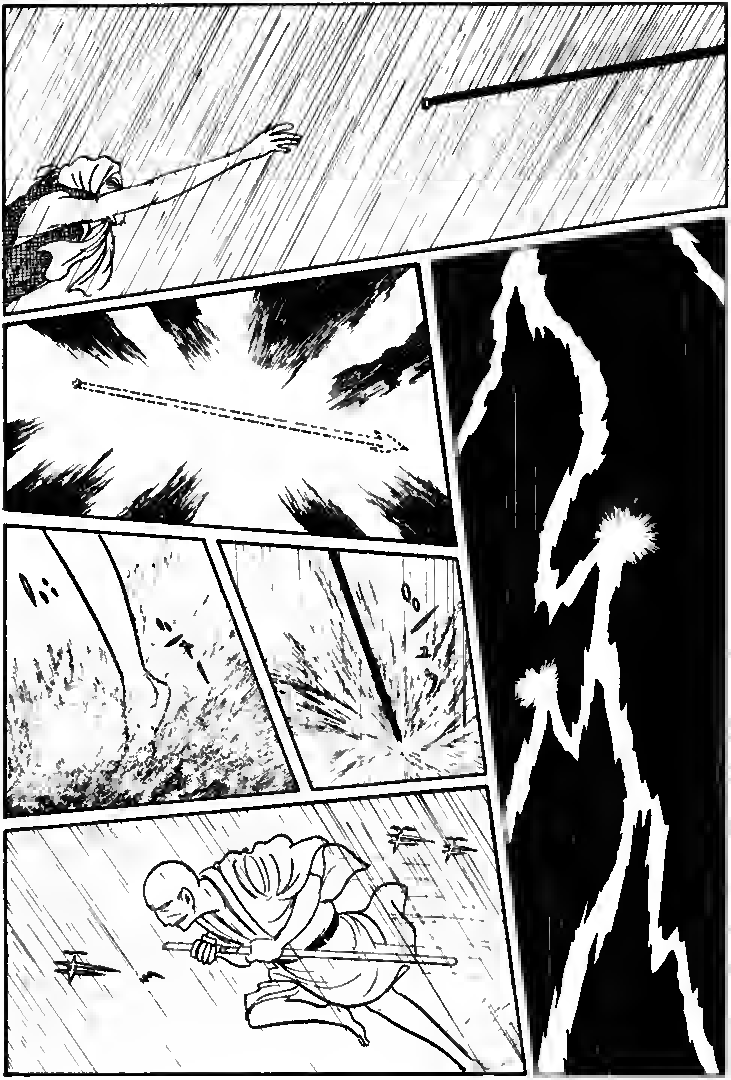

we had gone drinking and riding our horses to beat the heat— and we found that girl...
—Could one of her relatives have done it!?
Ah....!

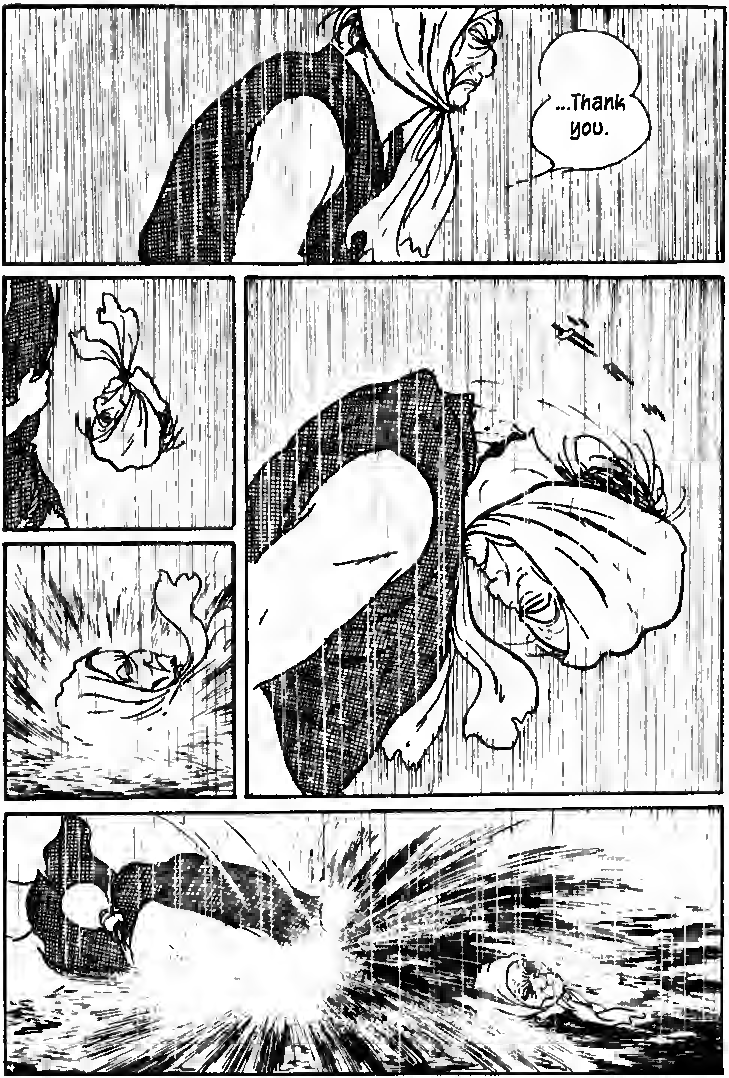
Urgh...

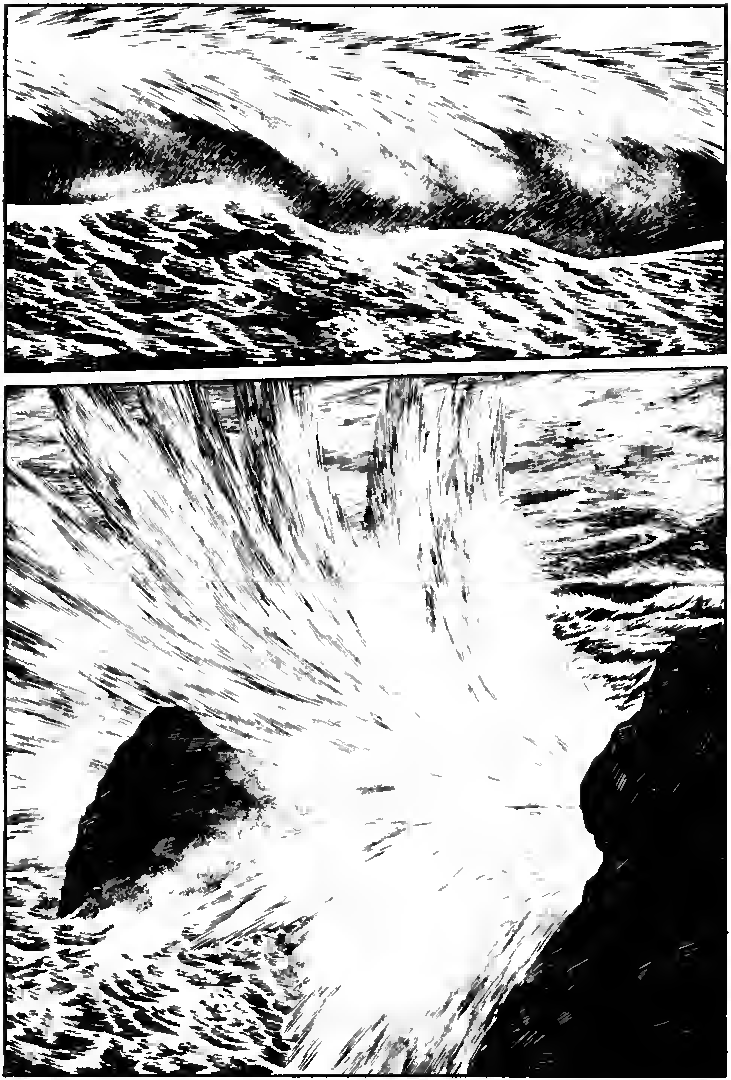

D-Dam-mit!
The three who were killed were good friends!
They were always together!
We realized that was the key and we chased after him...!
But we were too late...!
.....



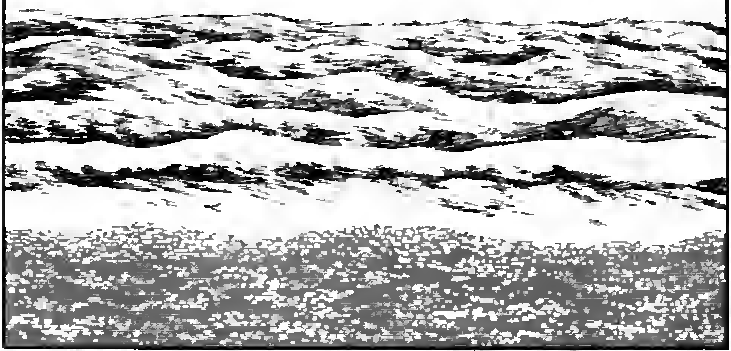

Get down, Ichi!
He's got his harpoon readied!
...Out of my way, Sabu




...Thank you.



THE RUMBLING OF THE SEA –
THE SOUND OF THE WAVES
CRASHING AGAINST THE SHORE,
LIKE DISTANT THUNDER...
WAS ALSO THE SOUND OF THE
REMAINING FOOTSTEPS.



August 1970 "The Rumbling of the Sea" (FIN)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 46
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 47: Gathering Clouds

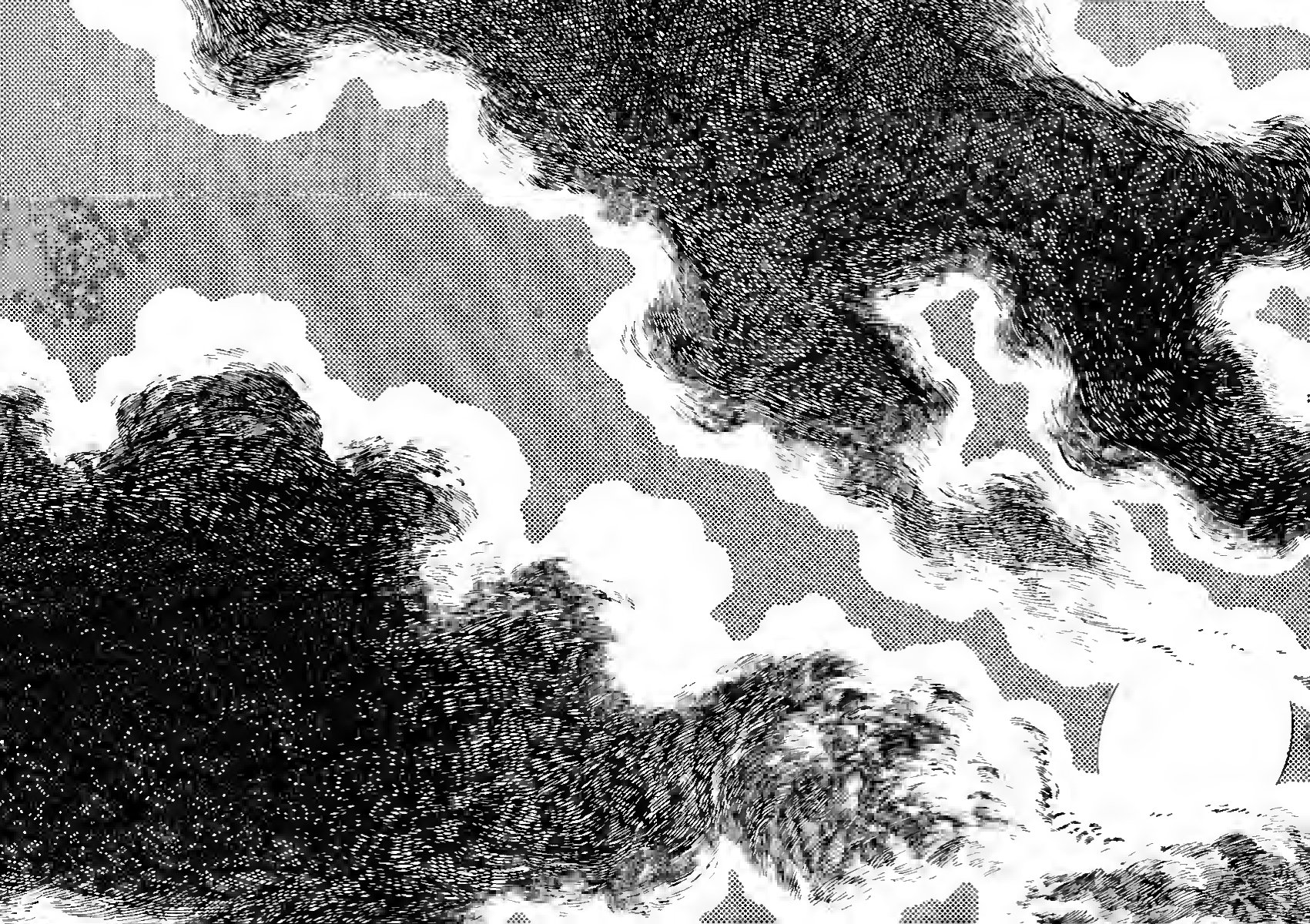
叢雲

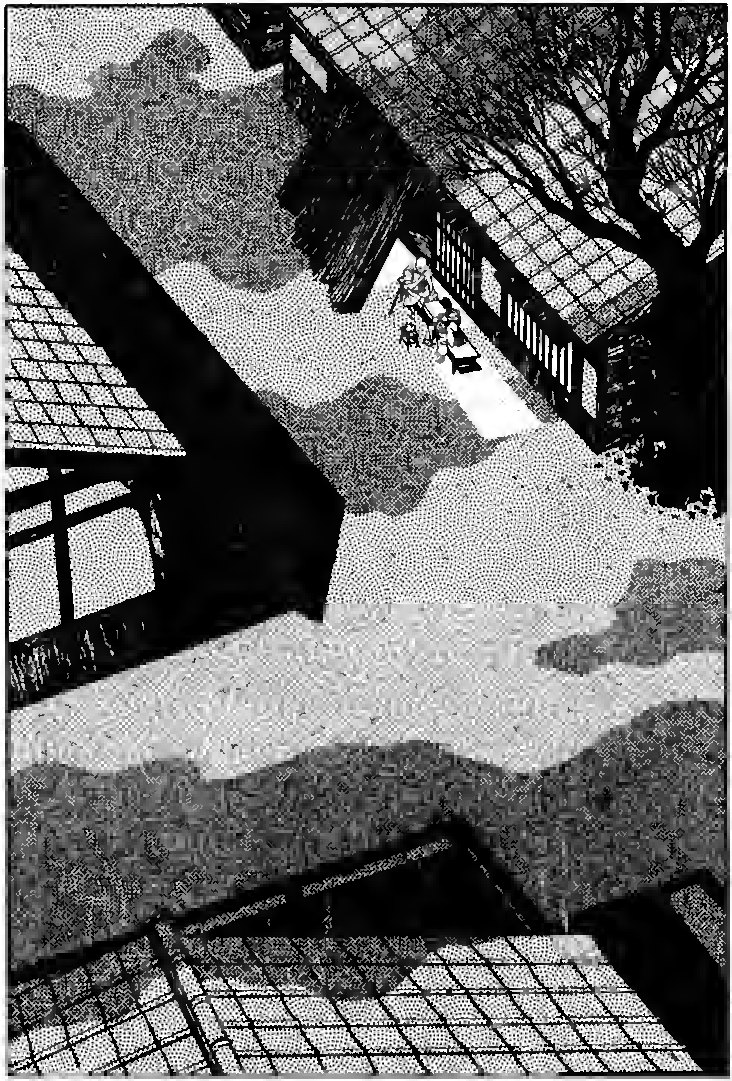
THE TWENTY-SIXTH NIGHT'S WAIT

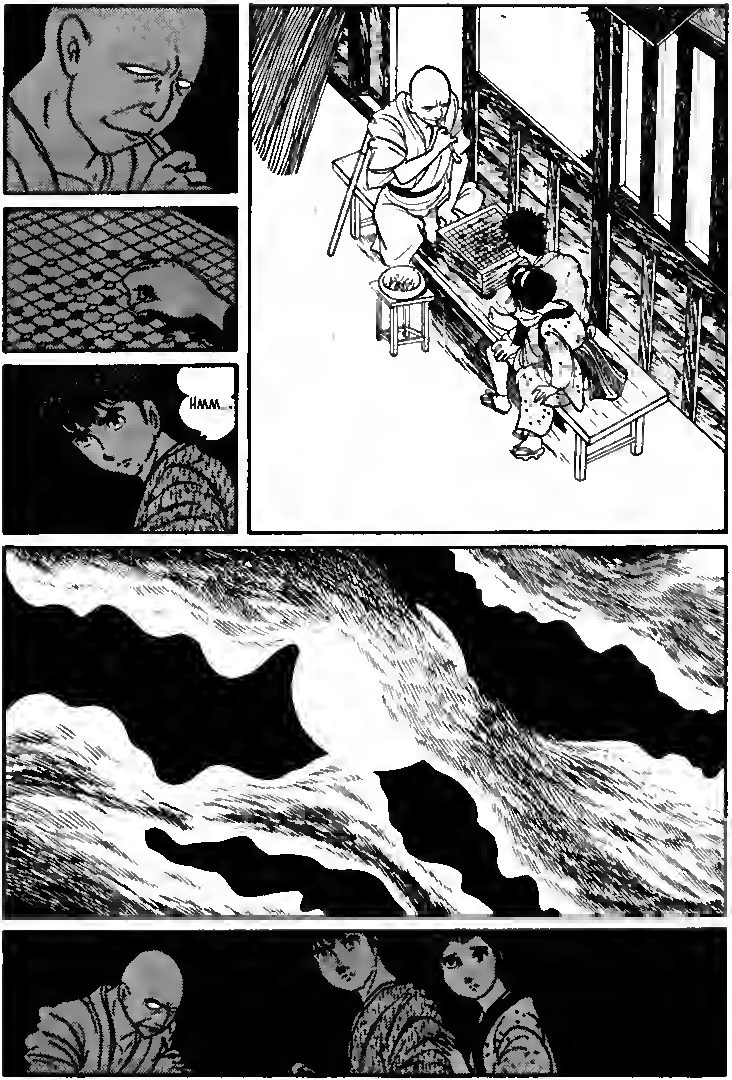
THE NIGHT OF JULY 26TH BY THE OLD RECKONING (LATE AUGUST BY MODERN RECKONING), ALSO COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE "SIXTH NIGHT'S WAIT"

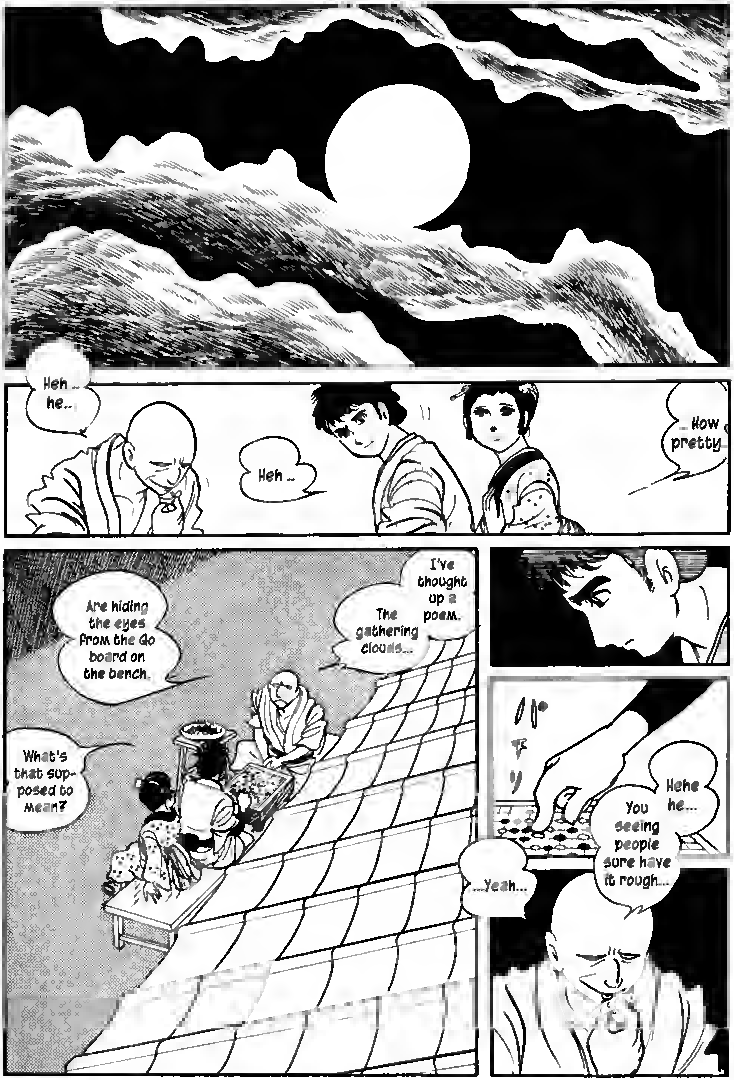
IT WAS SAID THAT IF THE MOON'S IMAGE APPEARED THRICE IN THE SKY, AND CAME BACK TOGETHER, GOOD FORTUNE WOULD FALL UPON THOSE WHO GAZED UPON IT. SO THE CITIZENS OF EDO WOULD COME OUT TO SEE THE MOON SHINING IN THE CLEAR NIGHT SKY OF EARLY AUTUMN, AND HIGH GROUNDS SUCH AS MT. MATSUCHI OF UENO AND ASAKUSA, THE YUSHIMA PLATEAU, THE GRAND SHRINE OF KANDA, KUDAN HILL, AND MT. ATAGO, AS WELL AS SHORES LIKE SHINAGAWA, SUZAKI, AND TAKANAWA, WERE ALL QUITE FILLED WITH PEOPLE. THERE WERE SHOPS SELLING DUMPLINGS, WATERMELON, FRIED SQUID, AND SUSHI, BEGGARS TELLING TALES, DANCING STANDS, AND JIWAKA DANCES, PLENTY OF MUSIC AND DANCING, AND EVEN MANY DRUNKARDS DAZED BY WINE BY THE TIME THE MOON ROSE, ASKING "WHERE'D THE MOON GO"...

THE ALMANAC OF EDO SAYS, "...BOTH THE HIGHER- AND LOWER-CLASS PEOPLE OF EDO MAKE THEIR PREPARATIONS WELL IN ADVANCE, AND A BANQUET IS HELD IN THE SEA PAVILION OF TAKANAWA IN SHINAGAWA, INVITING THE PEOPLE WITH THE SOUND OF DRUMS AND INSTRUMENTS, AND THE SINGERS, JESTERS, AND FEMALE ACTORS OF THE CITY WOULD ALL FLOCK HERE. OTHERS WOULD HOLD DRINKING BOUTS ON BOATS, SO THE LAND AND SEA WAS FILLED WITH MUSIC AND SONG."






HMM...

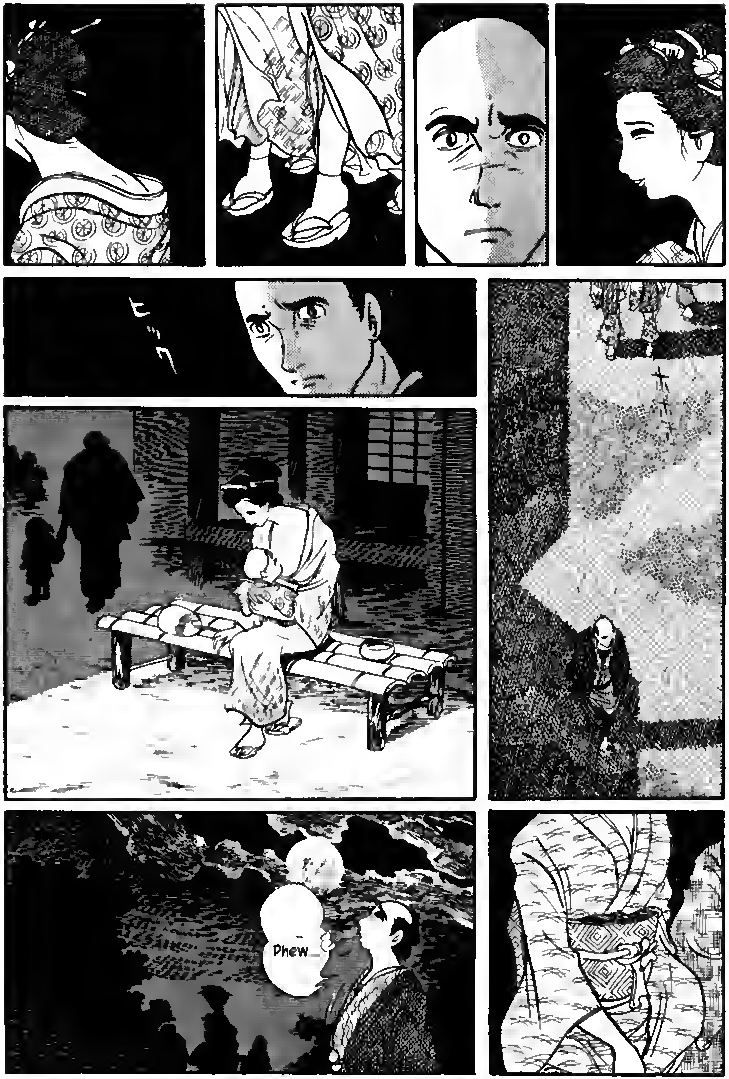

Heh... he...
Heh...
...How pretty
I've thought up a poem.
The gathering clouds...
Are hiding the eyes from the Go board on the bench.
What's that supposed to mean?
Hehe he...
You seeing people sure have it rough...
...Yeah...

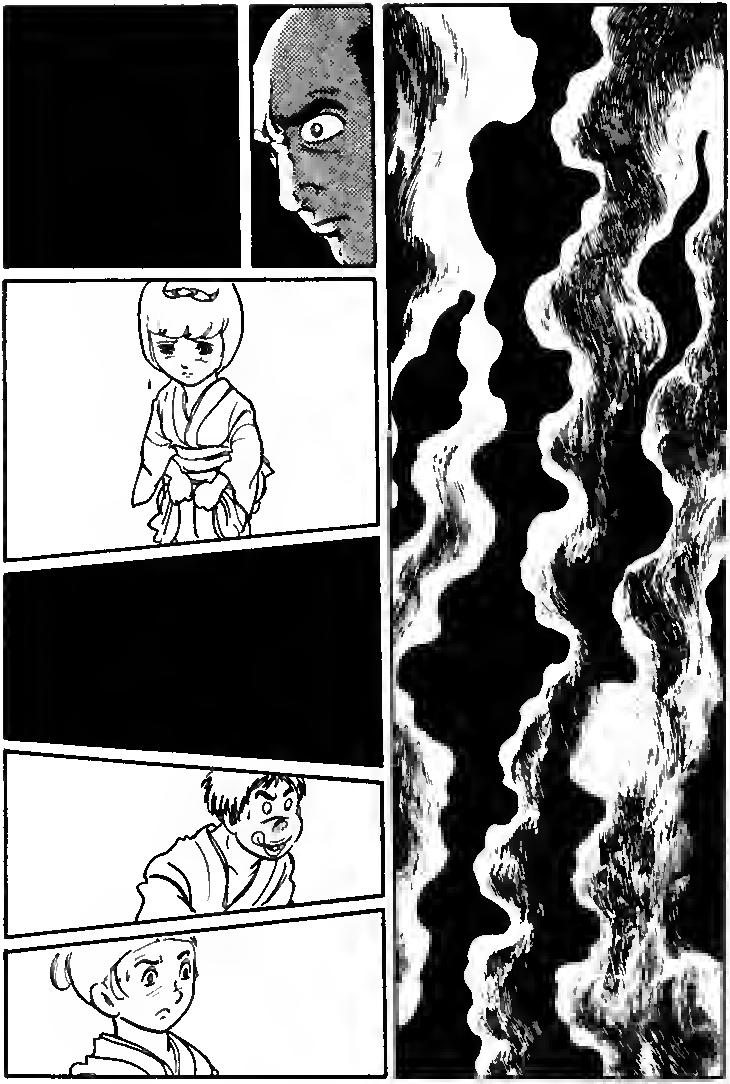
Isn't it a great poem?
You confuse the crossings on the Go board...
And when that happens...
What I mean is, the gathering clouds are hiding the moon, blinding you...
Oh, can't you tell?
A great poem, huh...?
Ehehe...
Heh...
...Oh, no, not again!
...Oh?

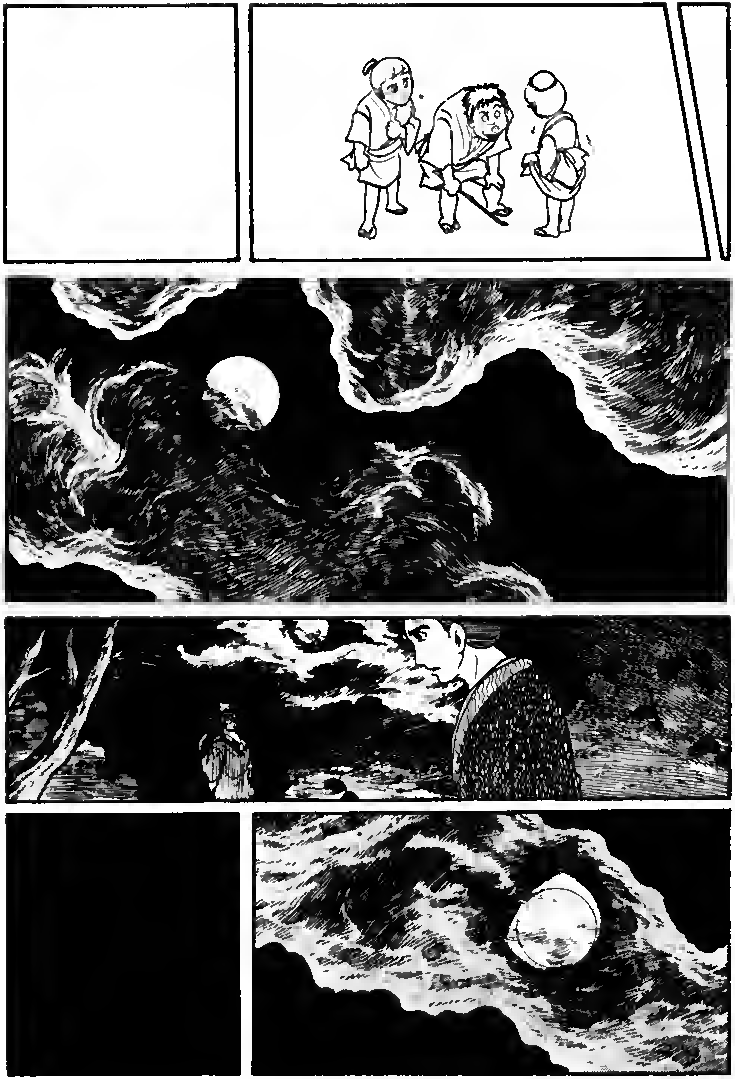
Ryuizumi Tampia's...
Hey,
Oh, look who's here!
Boss Toyozo of Kuramon District
...so while I was here... I decided to take a walk to Mt. Matsuchi...
I see,
So you can celebrate the Sixth Night's Wait in style?
Are you on duty?
Just where are you off to?
An acquaintance nearby called me to their house.
No, you see.
Yes, sorry to disturb you...
Well, I must be off...
Hehe Yeah, I guess

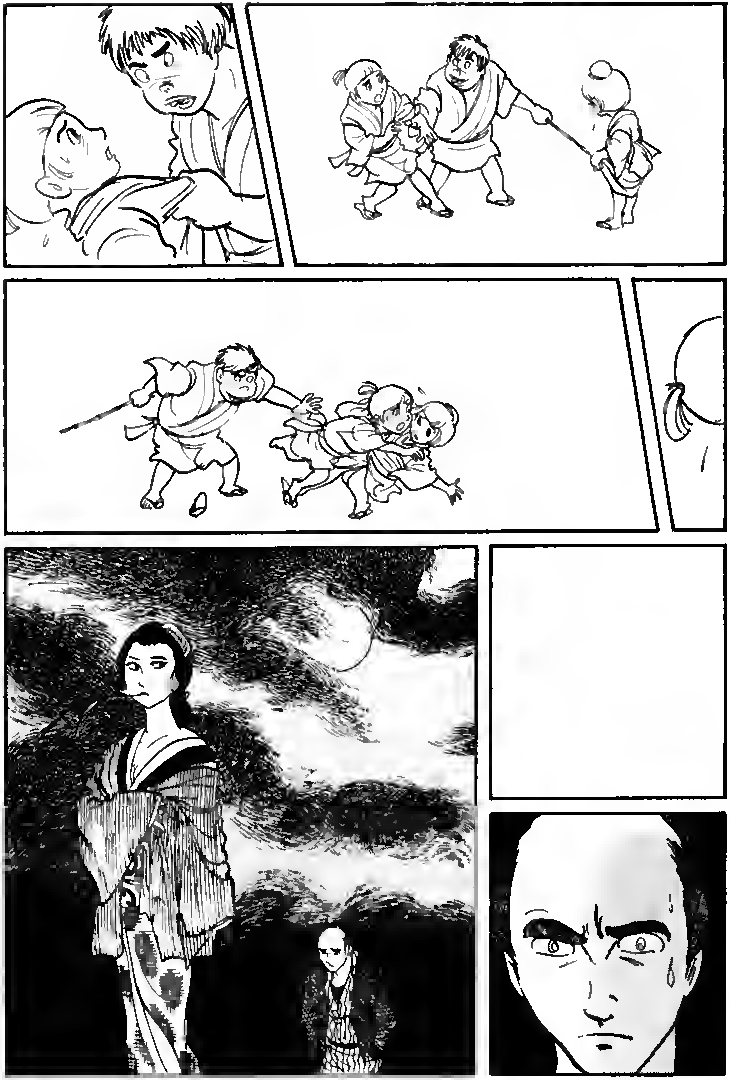
You have a point.
but he's known among his friends for his incorruptible character... He's an honest man!
Heh... Well, Sabu, sometimes people do that.
That's strange... He was drunk.
How great! Why don't you take a lesson or two from him, Sabu...?
Heh. Gimme a break.
If you're that incorruptible, then if you ever do let loose, you're in danger of being out of control.
Whoa... Wait, I'm not ready to place the stone yet!
I've thought of another poem.
"Wait, wait, wait," he says, I'll have a six night's wait for him to place a stone.
Tch!
Tee hee hee...
Heh hehe he...
I know it's the Sixth's Night Wait, but still...
While eating soybeens, finishing do will be a twenty-six night's wait... There.

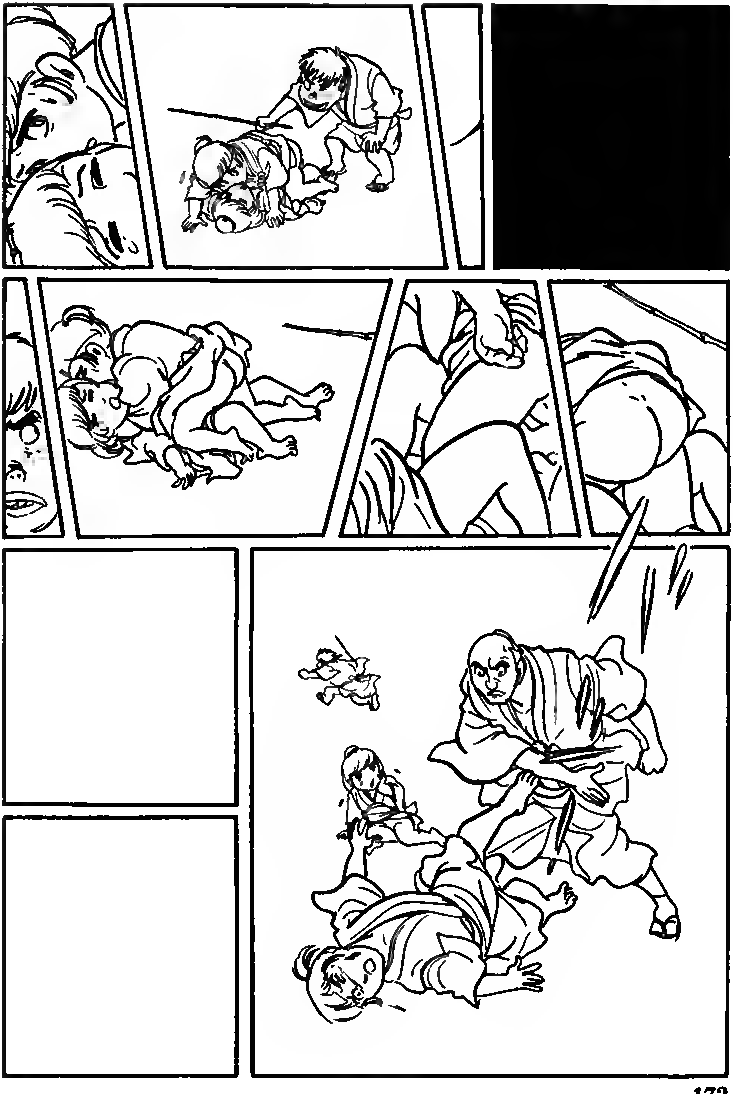
...She's real pretty...
...Boss Sahei's daughter...
Kch!
ズシン
ハハハ
オホホホ

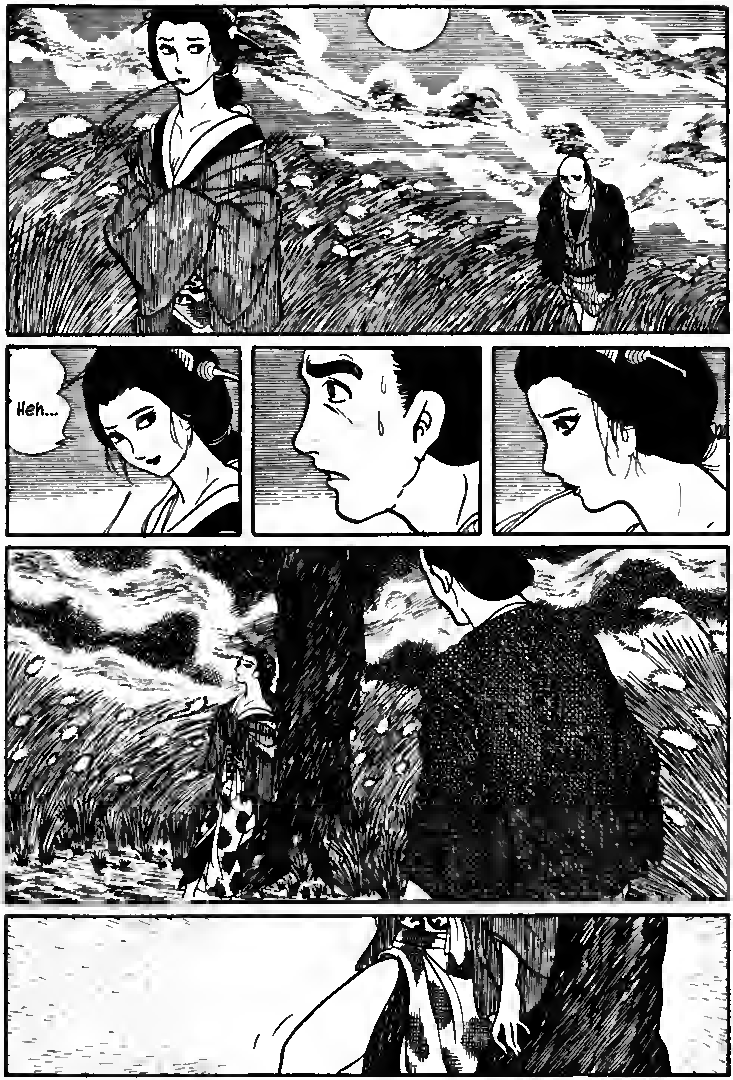

Phew...

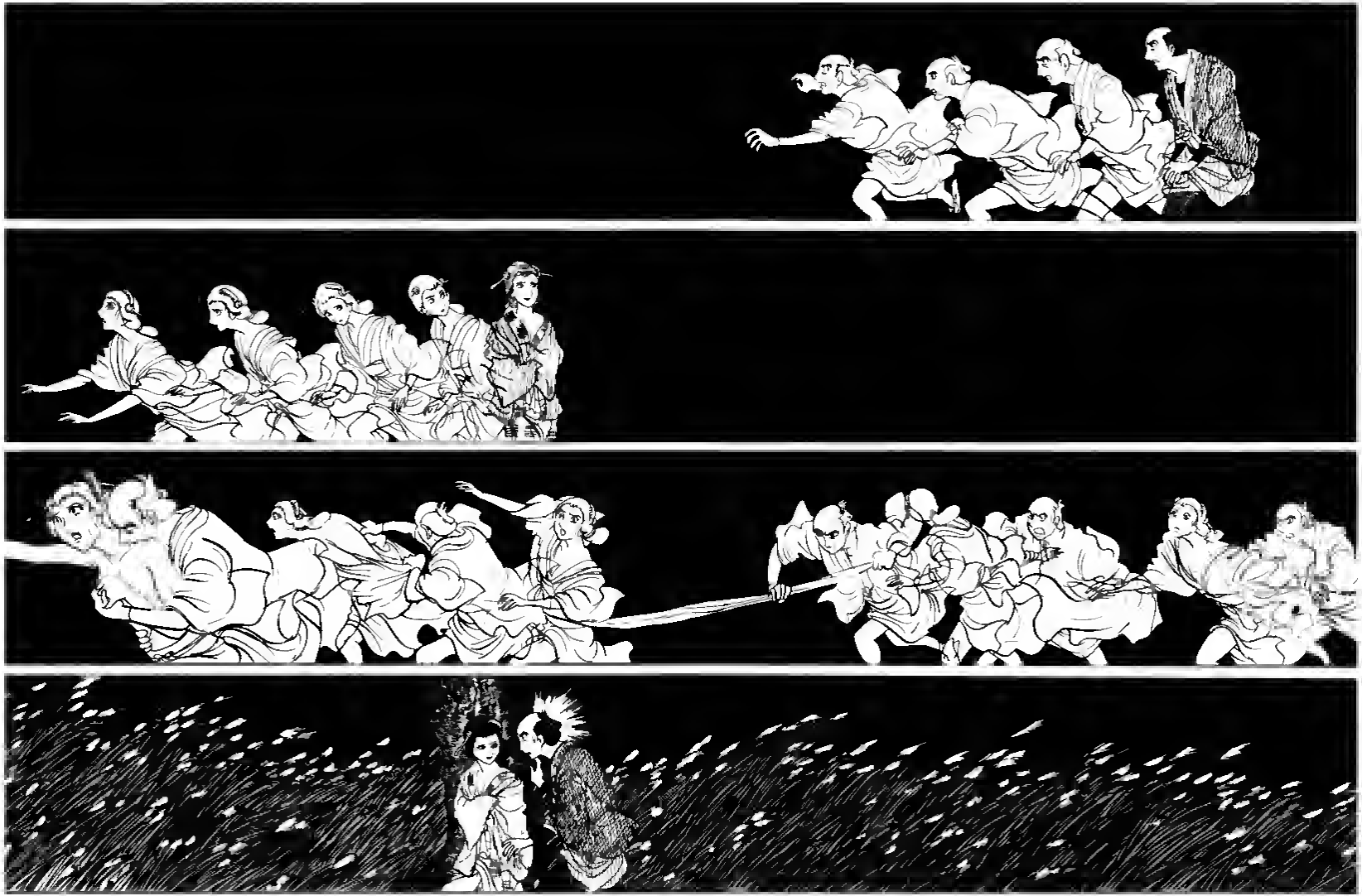


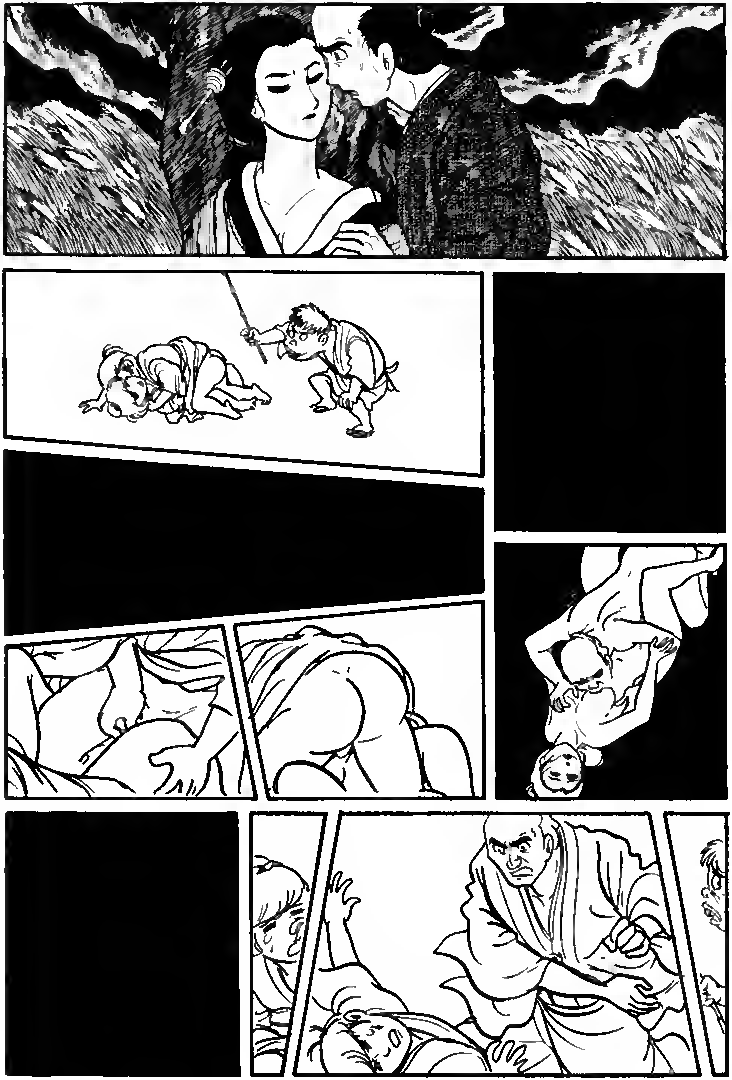


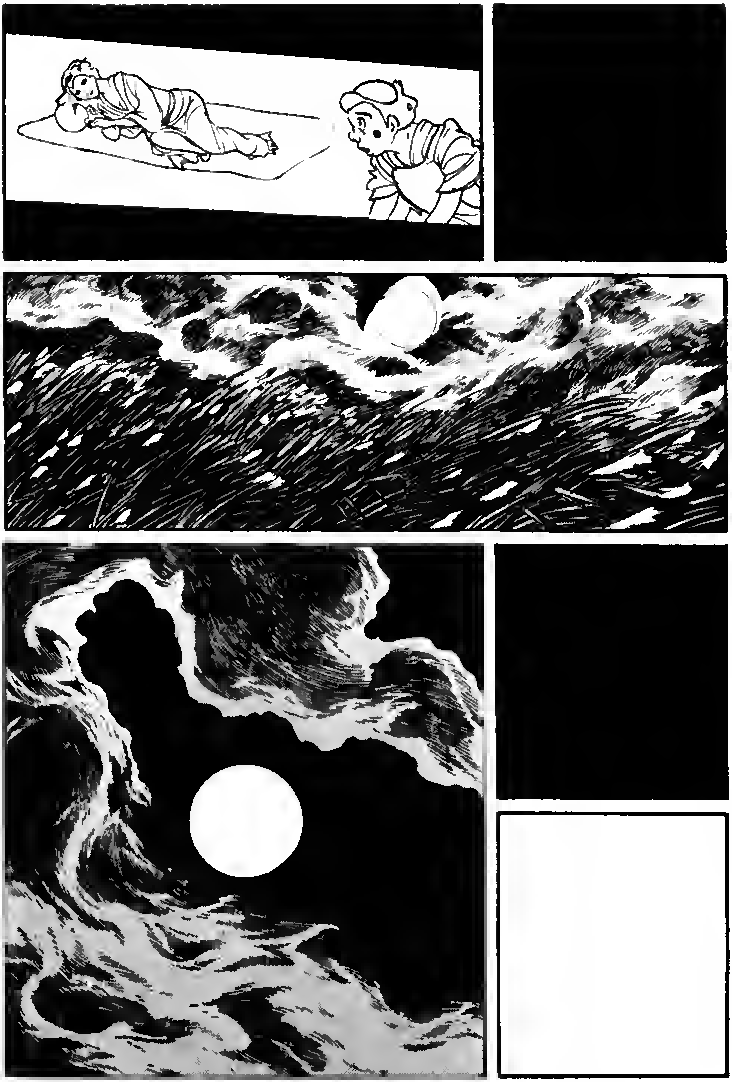


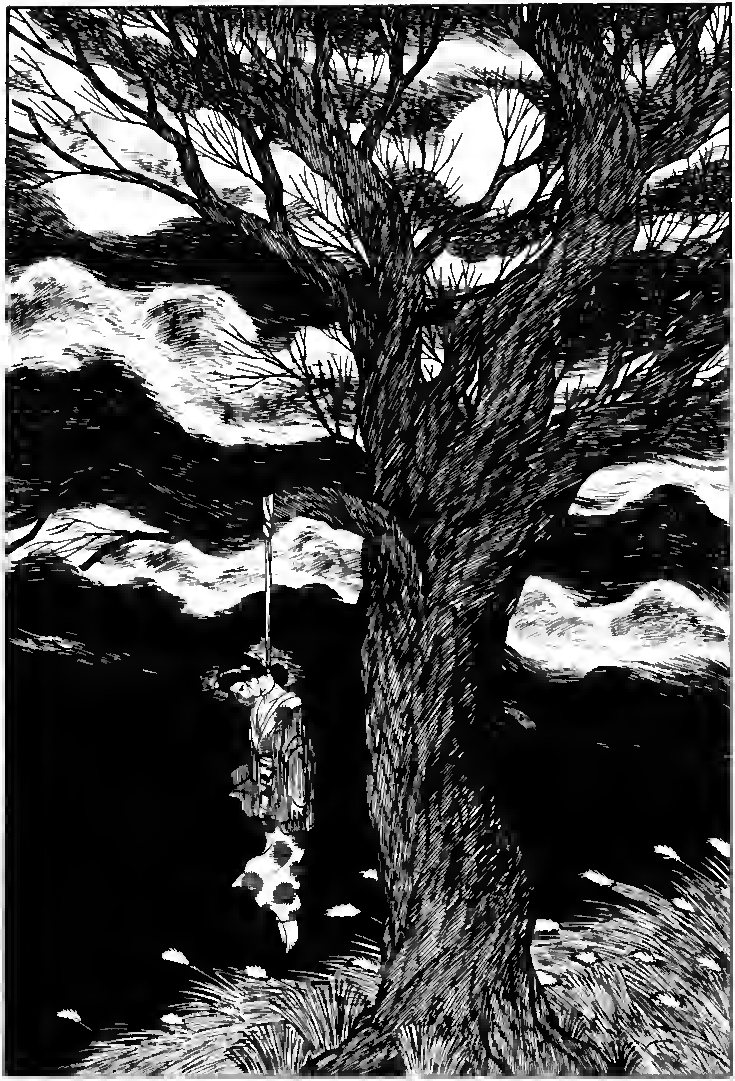


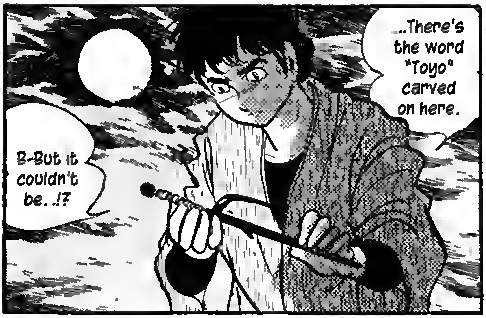

Heh...

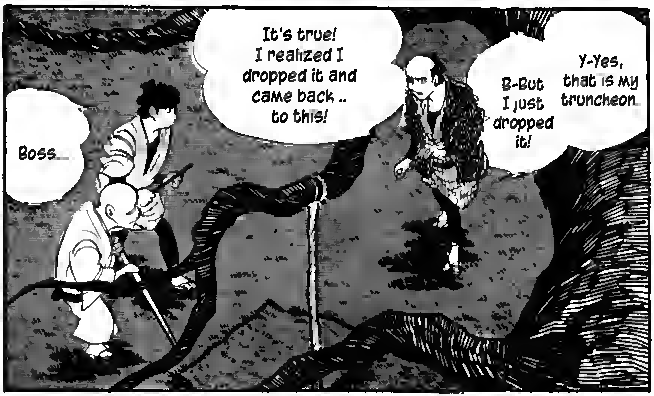






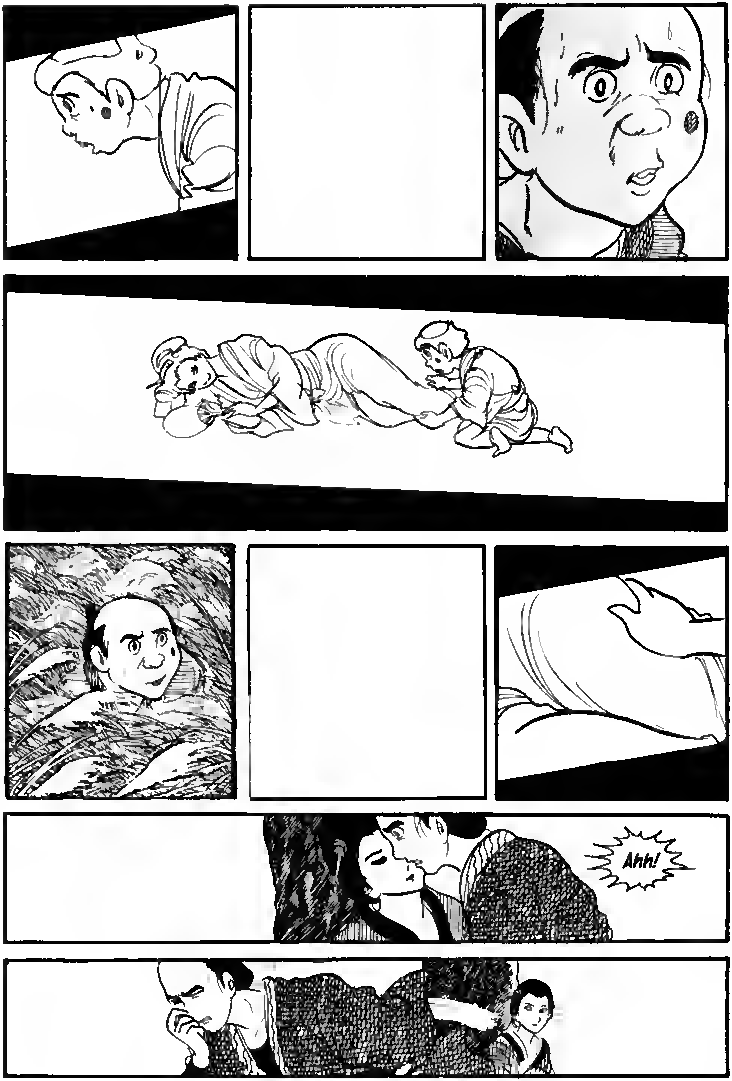



...There's the word "Toyo" carved on here.
B-But it couldn't be..!?

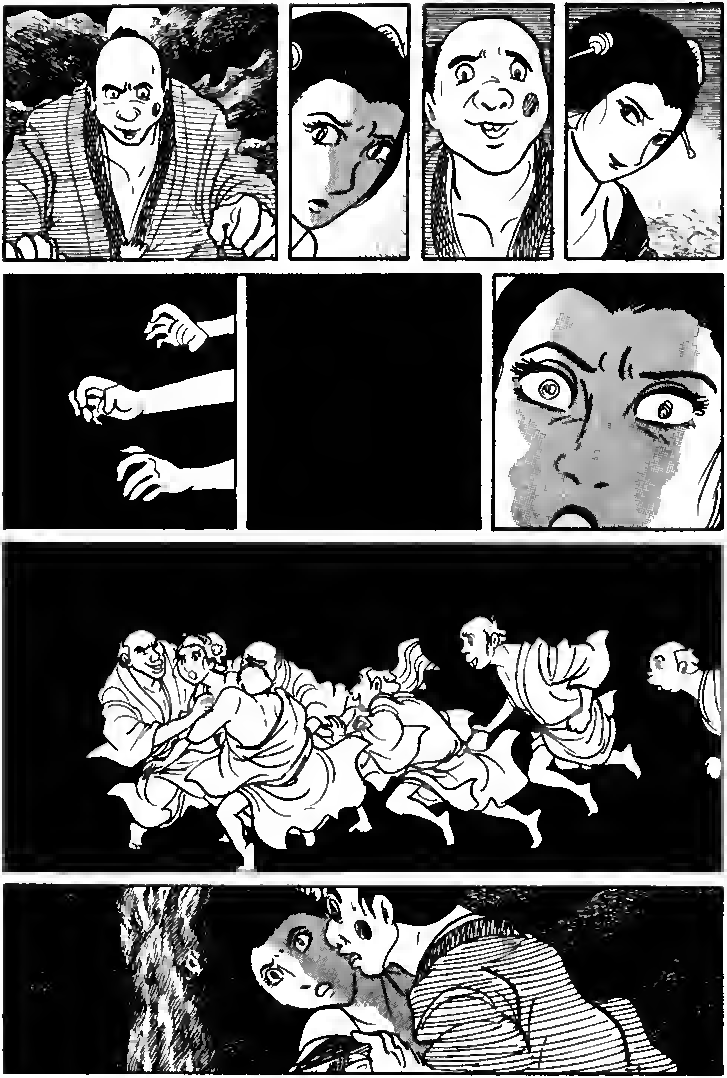

Boss...
It's true! I realized I dropped it and came back.. to this!
B-But I just dropped it!
Y-Yes, that is my truncheon.

I don't want to have to accuse you of this...
But the fact is... These people saw you following this woman.
N-No!
I-I may have been walking near her, but... I didn't do it!
And...
Many of these people here heard a woman's screams.
No one screams when they hang themselves.
.....

P-Please wait, good sir.
T-The woman was screaming...
b-because of me.


Ahh!

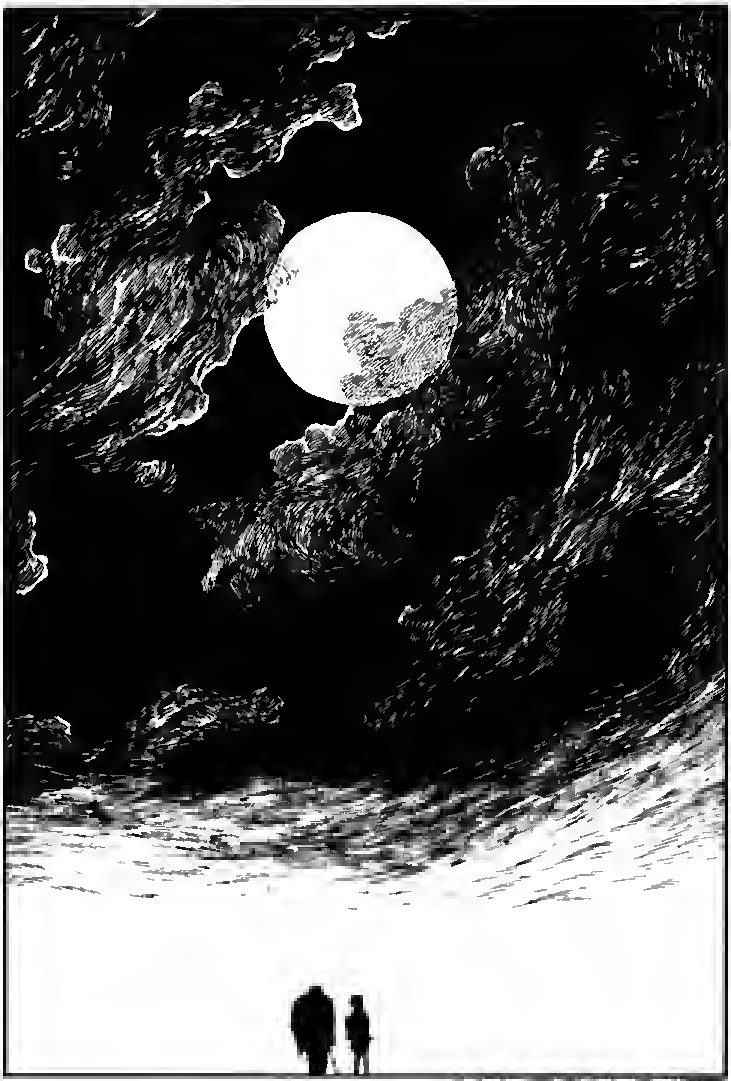
..Hmpf.



I-That woman invited me over...
but she just started screaming out of the blue.
I-I was so...

...So...
So startled that I ran as quick as I could!
S-So I don't know anything that happened after that...
Which would mean..
Suicide!?
... Probably.
Not even a woman... with only one hand.
...You're right. You wouldn't be able to hang someone...

...that would've made her want to die...
Something sorrowful...
or dreadful must've happened to her...
that the hanging woman's cheeks were wet with tears...
Someone mentioned earlier
Everyone has a dark secret hidden within their hearts.
She must've remembered the past.
And sometimes, something causes it to surface.
...Just like the moon hidden by the gathering clouds...
And...
the moment it shows its face...
people become their true selves.



September 1970 "Gathering Clouds" (fin)

佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 67
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
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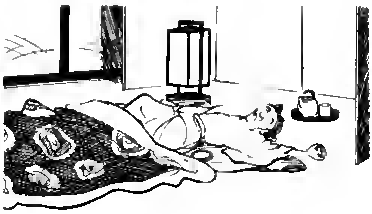
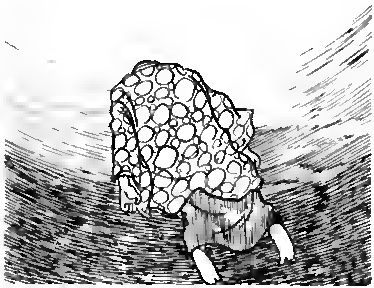
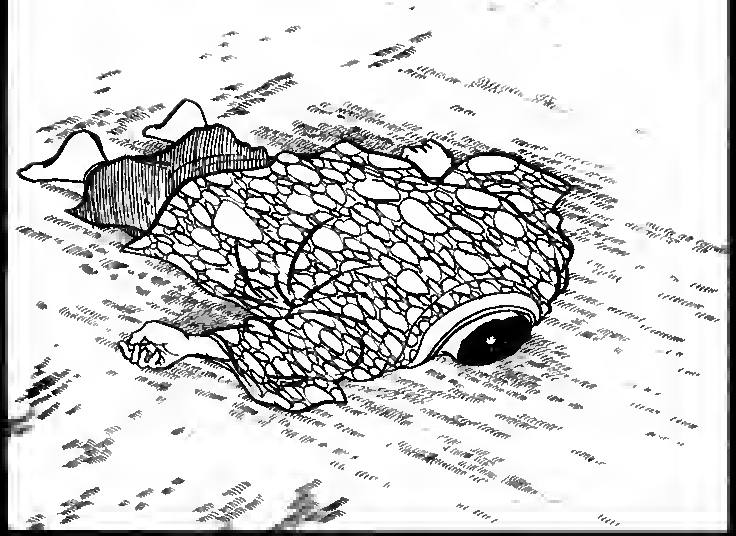
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 48: All Night in Search of a Harvest Moon or Lake





THE CAST

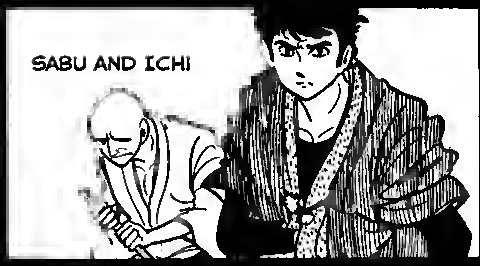


REGULAR ARTISAN HACHISUKE, DAUGHTER TOYO

POET ICHISAKA HONAMI

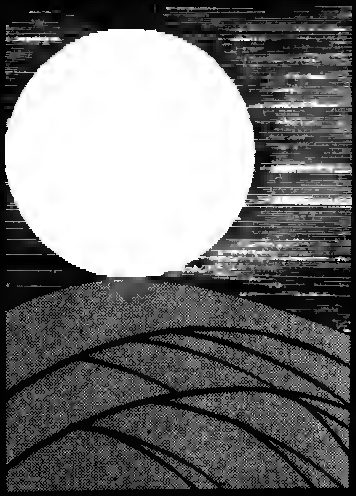
HOMELESS RONIN GENMA, GRAPHIC NOVEL WRITER'S MISTRESS NENE

GRAPHIC NOVEL
WRITER'S WIFE KANE


SABU AND ICHI

PALANQUIN-BEARERS

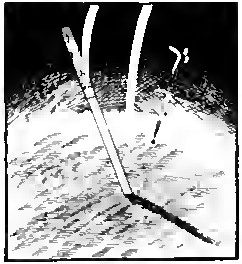
THE
STAGE



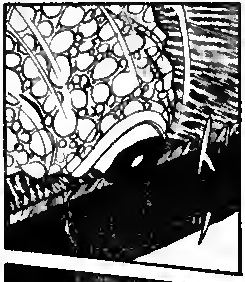
THE TITLE

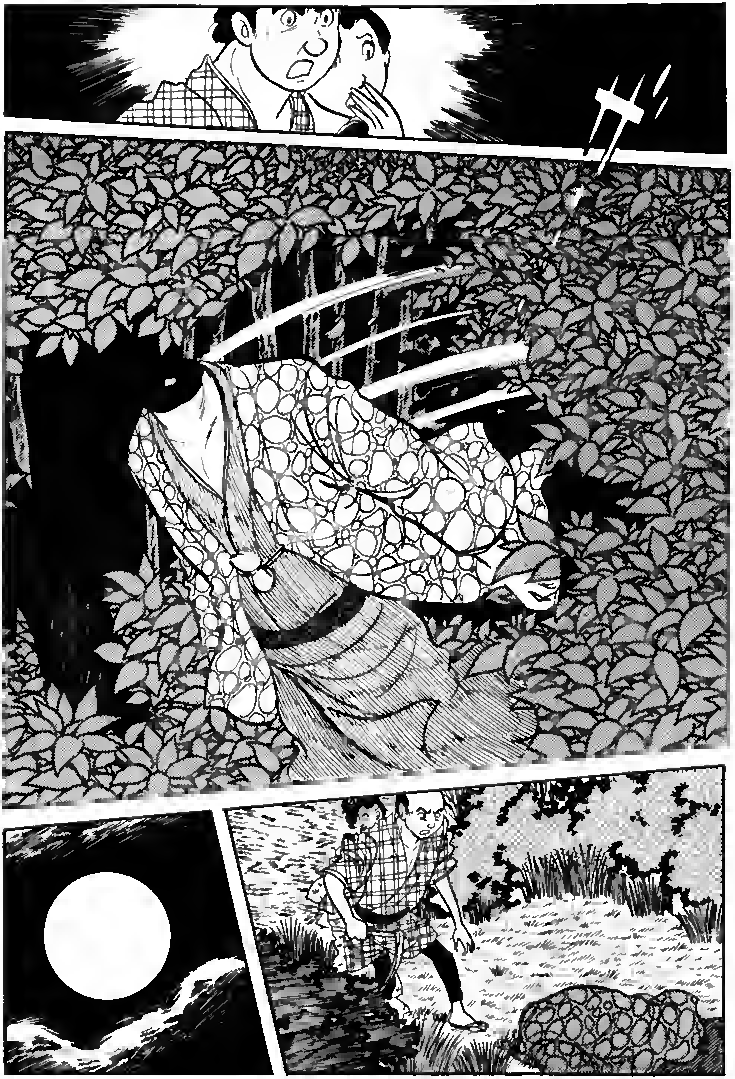
ALL NIGHT IN SEARCH OF A HARVEST MOON OR LAKE

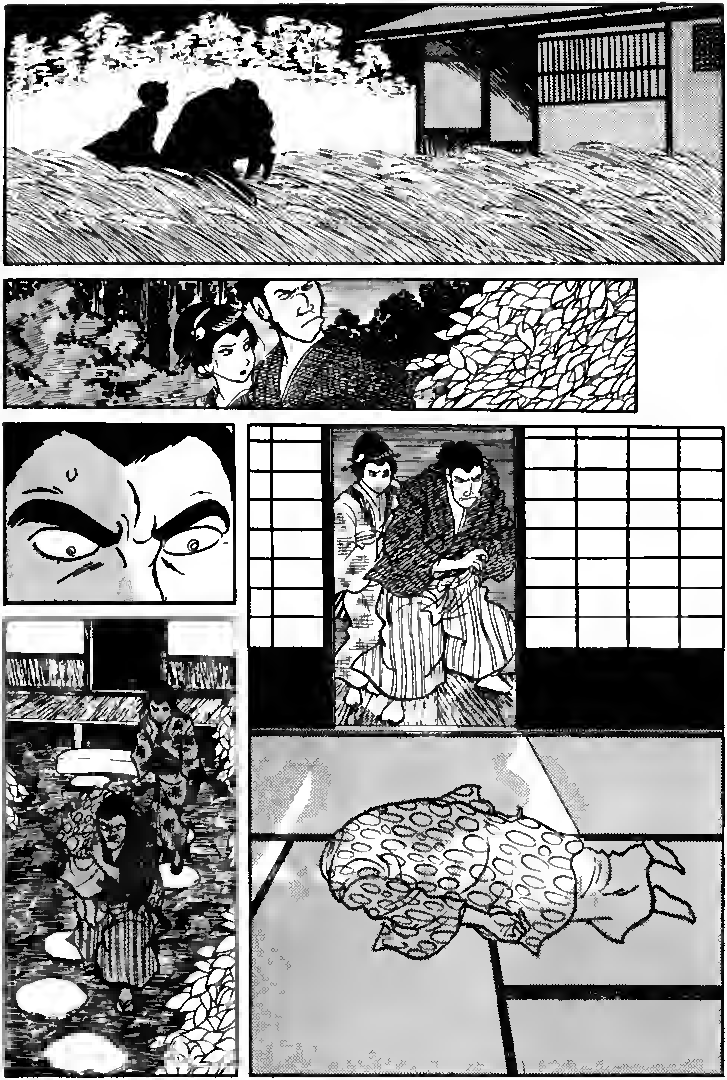
THE PLOT

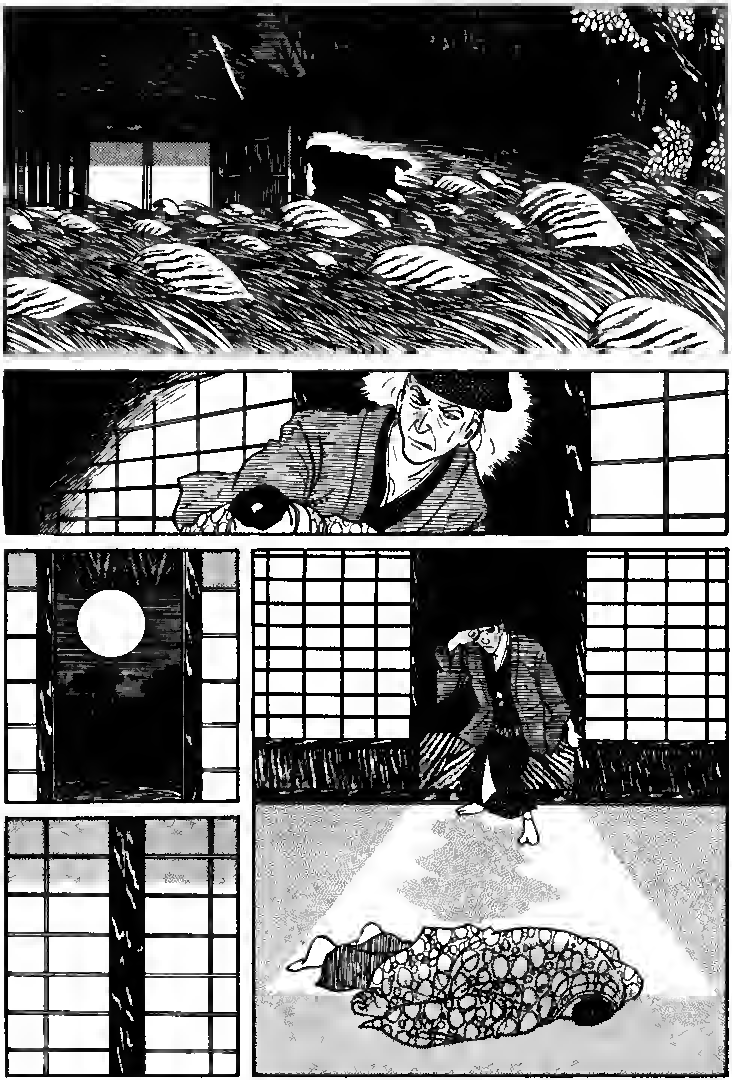


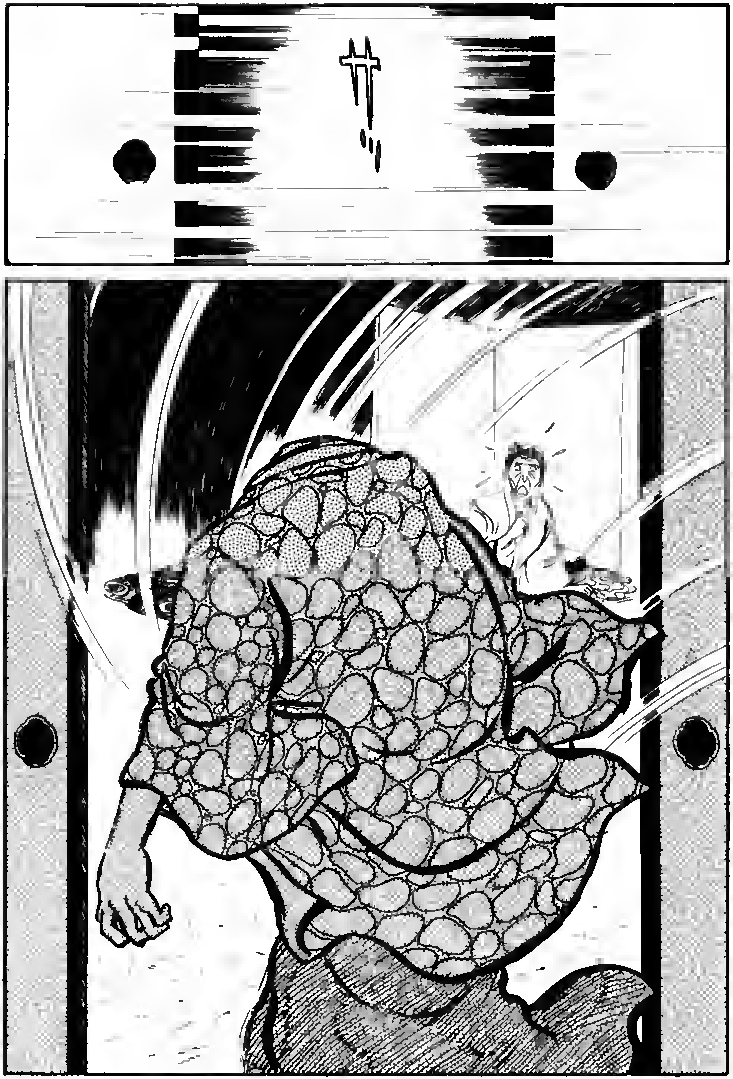
名月や池をめぐりて夜もすがら

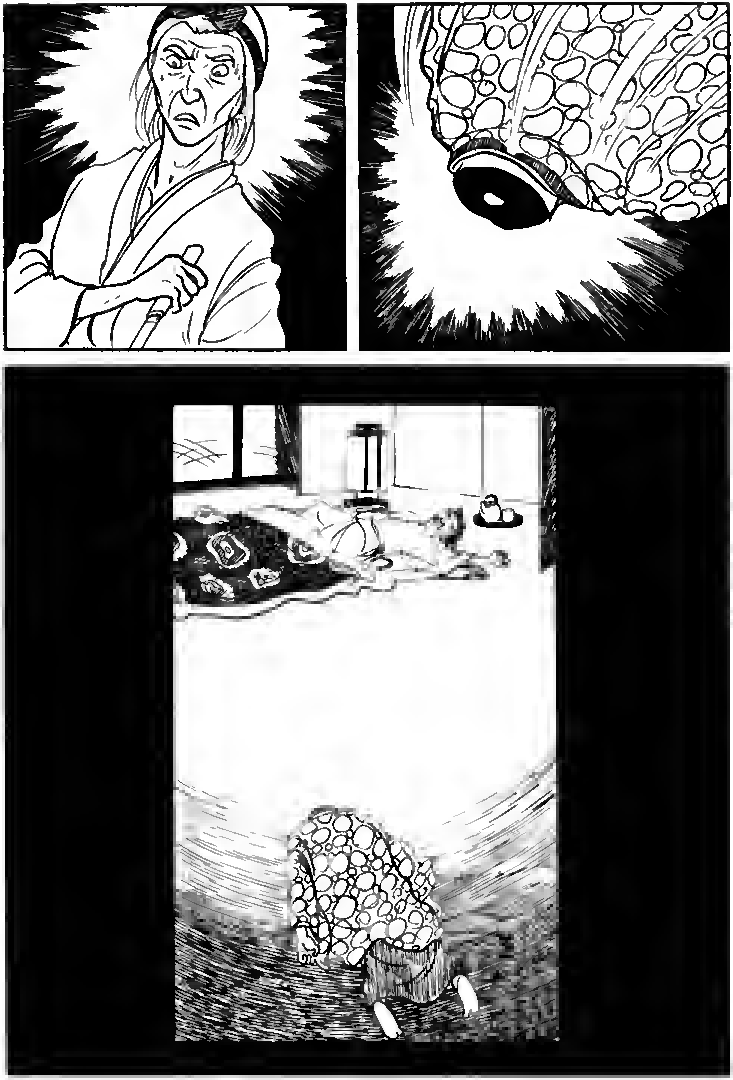


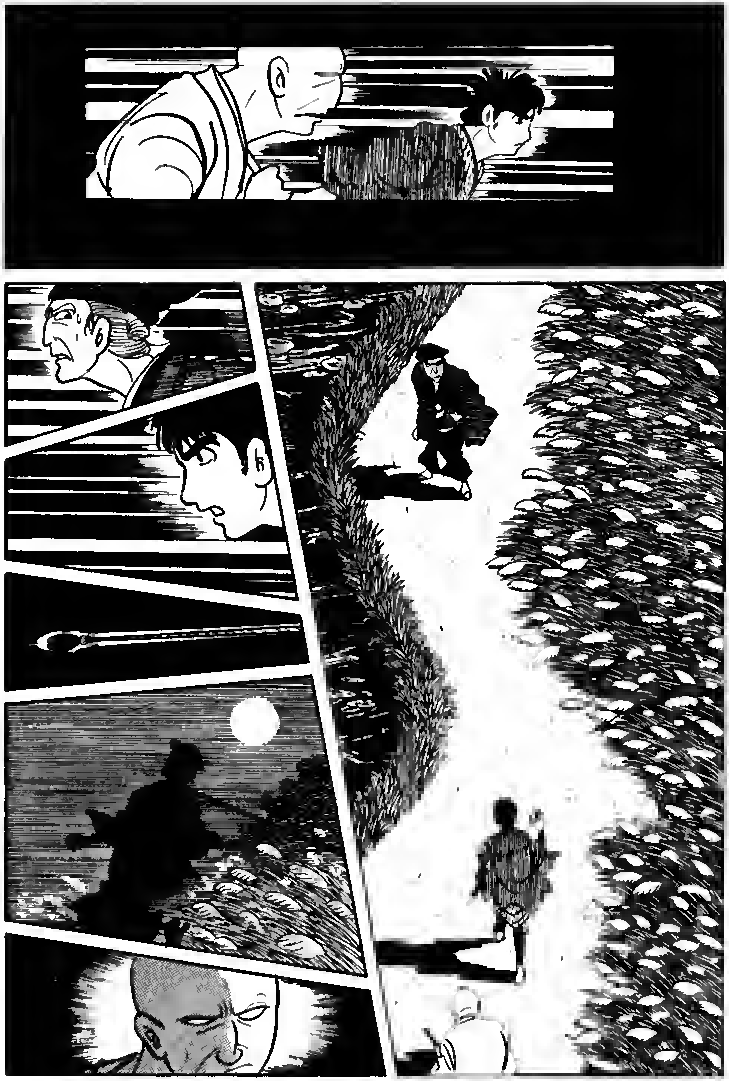


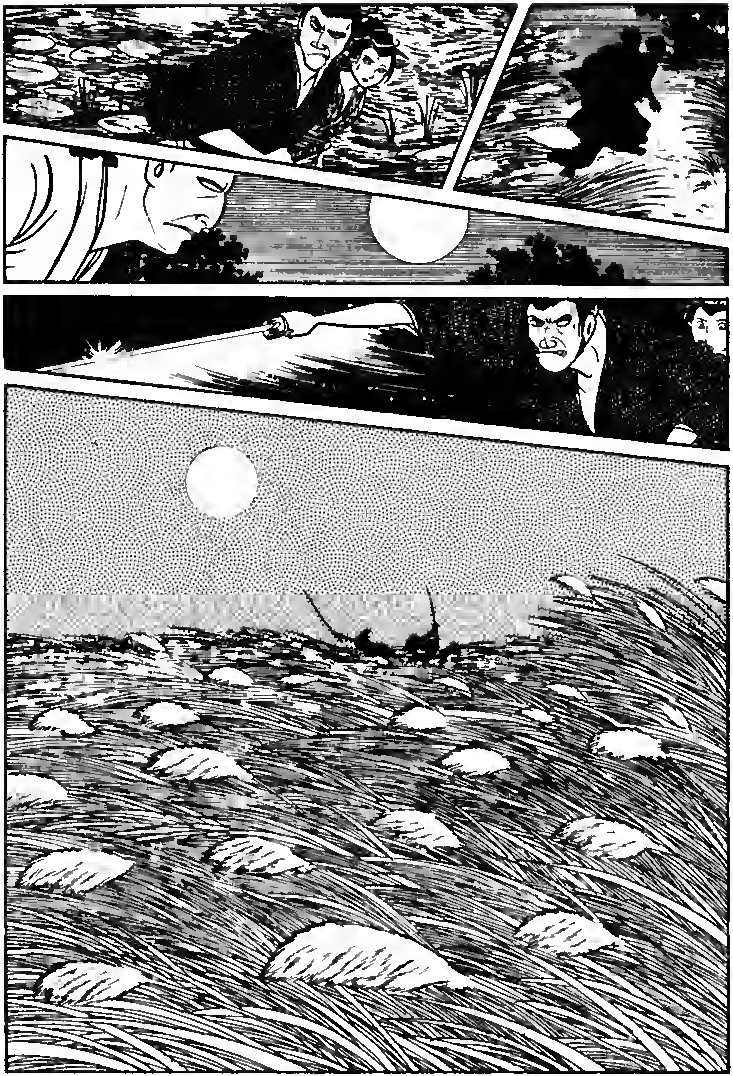












THE SOLU-TION

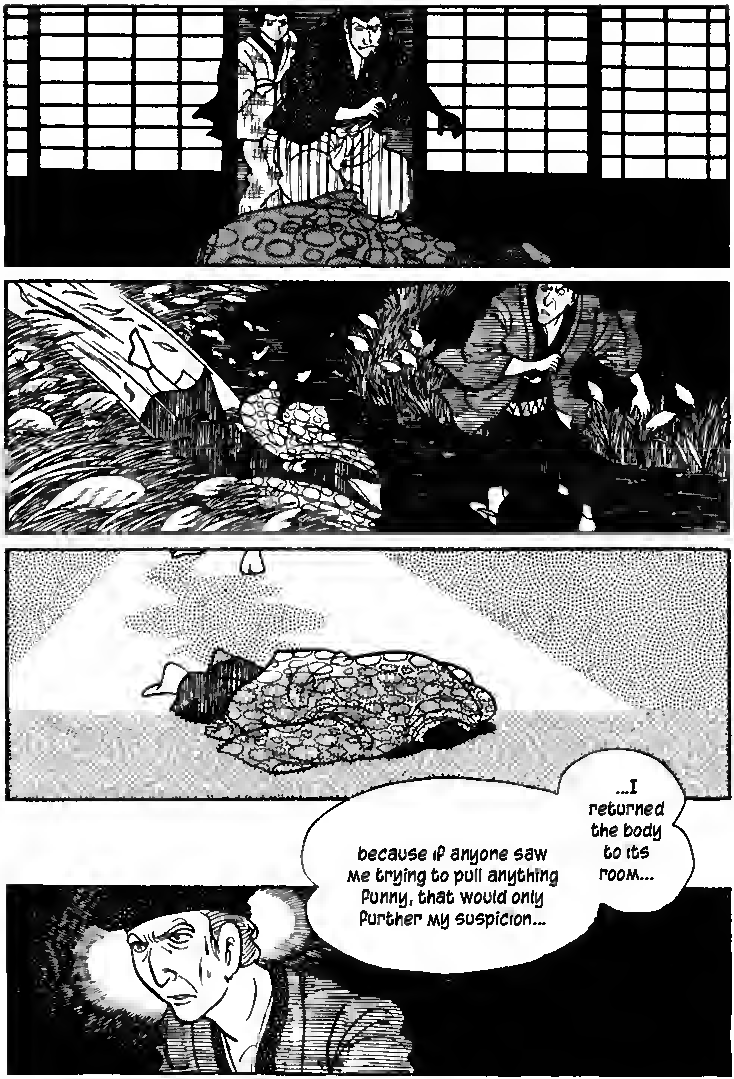
Until today at noon!
..I am a good friend of Bun'emon... or I should say I was a good friend
At noon...
I came to borrow some money to cover a medical expense
But he drew his sword and refused...
He even had the gall to insult me in a loud voice...!
...I used to be a samurai, despite my humble state...!
I would not suffer such scorn and contempt... Especially from someone who I had known as a friend for so long...
I could not bear it any longer, so I went back to give him a retort of my own.
And when I did...!
Yes, he was dead.
It's true!

I-I would have... pulled it out and intimidated him to lend the money...
I intended to bring the short sword along as a bluff.
Take a close look at my short sword It hasn't taken a soul!
I already knew that Nene had brought in that ronin behind Bun'emon's back, so if all went well, the blame would fall to both of them...
because I knew I would come under suspicion if anyone heard the argument at noon...
I took the body to Nene's detached house...
...I was certain that he had killed him.
He is incredibly jealous.

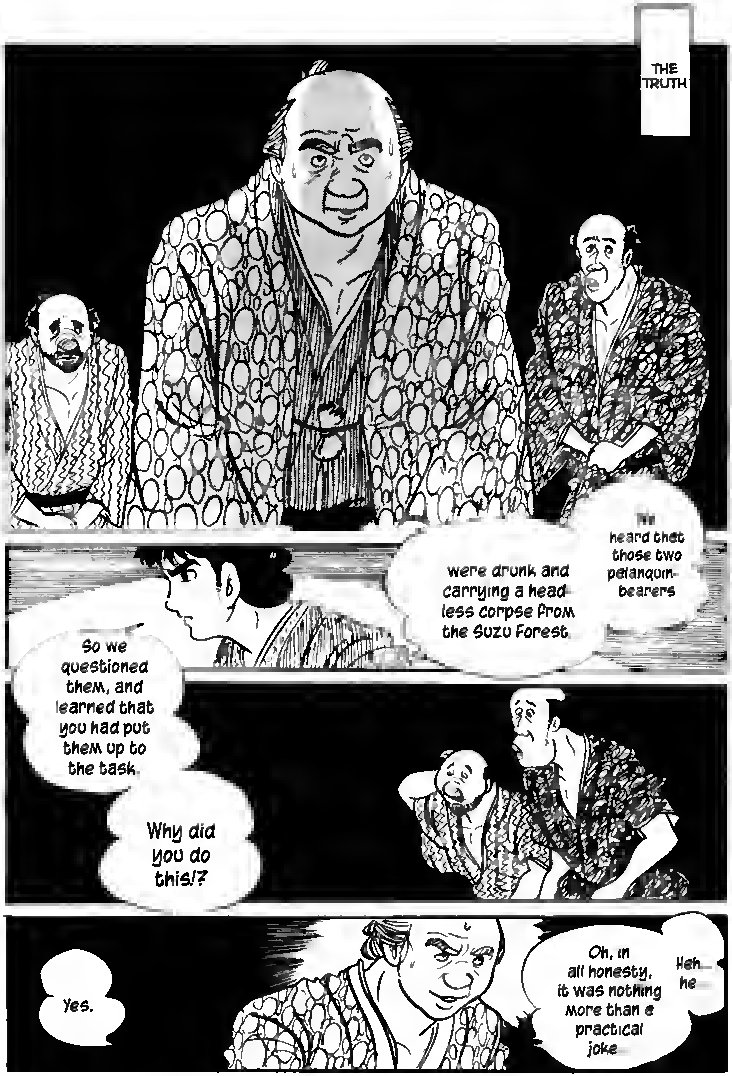
You kept saying... "I want to be with you as soon as possible."
Because you shivered at the slight thought of the old man touching you... even for money.
I... thought that you had done it.
So we thought we'd toss the body into a lake...
I can see why we'd be suspected when we found the body in our room.
Well, considering our relationship...
The one that said that I killed the man.
And then that person was there...
Because... that old man...
I thought... that he killed him.

I-I had told Hachisuke about it!
B-But I wouldn't have killed him...!
.. I had promised Toyo that I would meet her at the edge of the lake.

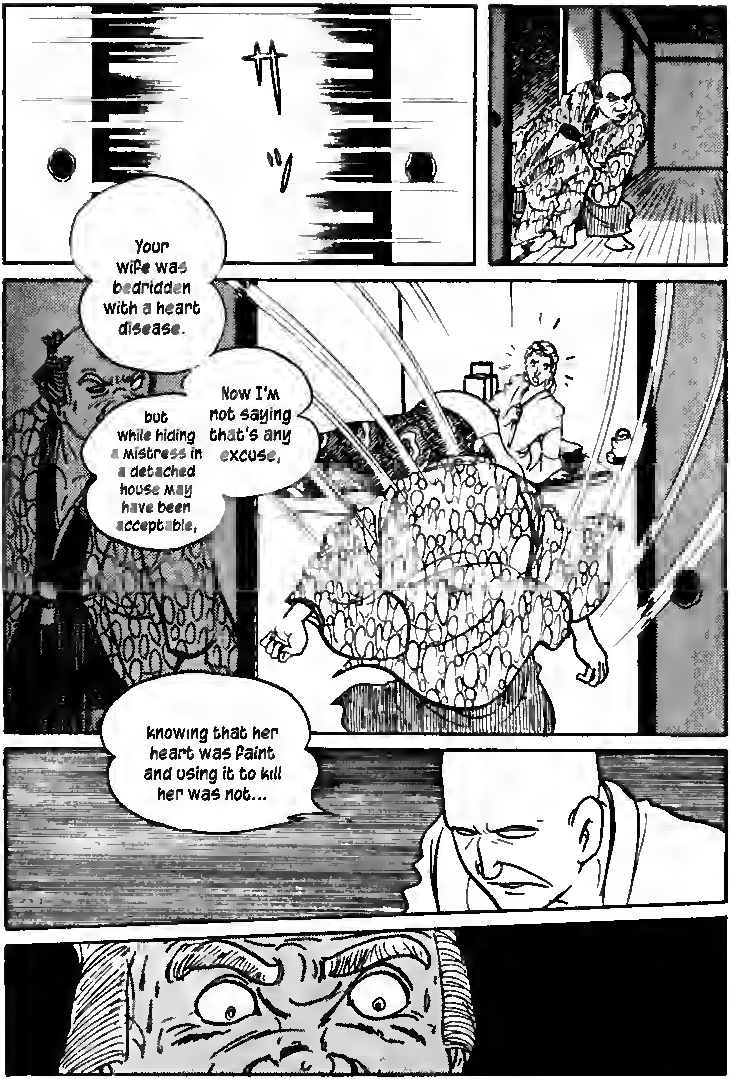
We had sworn ourselves to each other. .
but the master was against it.. So we were going to ask him again, and elope if it didn't work ..
...We knew tanuki soup was his favorite food...
So we were going to catch a tanuki and offer it to him as a gift...
Yes.
We could tell by the footsteps that someone had dragged the body here.
We guessed... that Nene and the homeless ronin were trying to pin the blame on us...

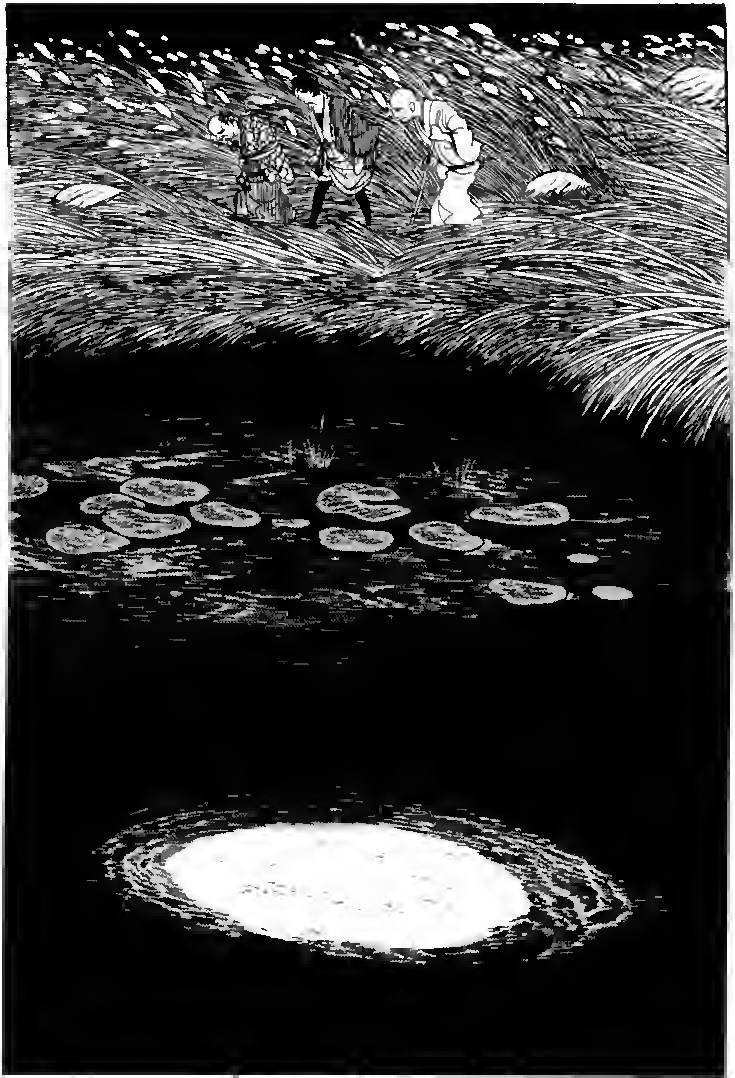

...I returned the body to its room...
because if anyone saw me trying to pull anything funny, that would only further my suspicion...

If I am to believe all of you, then who was the murderer!?
Heh!
That's obvious. It was whoever moved the body from his room to his wife's!
Ah, Master!!
What are you doing there...!?


THE TRUTH
I heard that those two palanquin-bearers
were drunk and carrying a headless corpse from the Suzu Forest.
So we questioned them, and learned that you had put them up to the task.
Why did you do this!?
Yes.
Oh, in all honesty, it was nothing more than a practical joke.
Heh... he

And it ended up just as I thought...
I couldn't help but feel that everyone was after my inheritance, so I couldn't trust any of them
.. So I decided to see what attitude they would all take if I died.
You're quite wrong about that..
It wasn't about your inheritance
Hardly anyone has seen... or even heard of.. your graphic novels.
Which would mean...
that you were after your wife's inheritance!
Your wife was keeping a tight hold on your pursestrings, so you .


Your wife was bedridden with a heart disease.
Now I'm not saying that's any excuse,
but while hiding a mistress in a detached house may have been acceptable,
knowing that her heart was faint and using it to kill her was not...



September 1970 "All Night in Search of a Harvest Moon or Lake" (FIN)

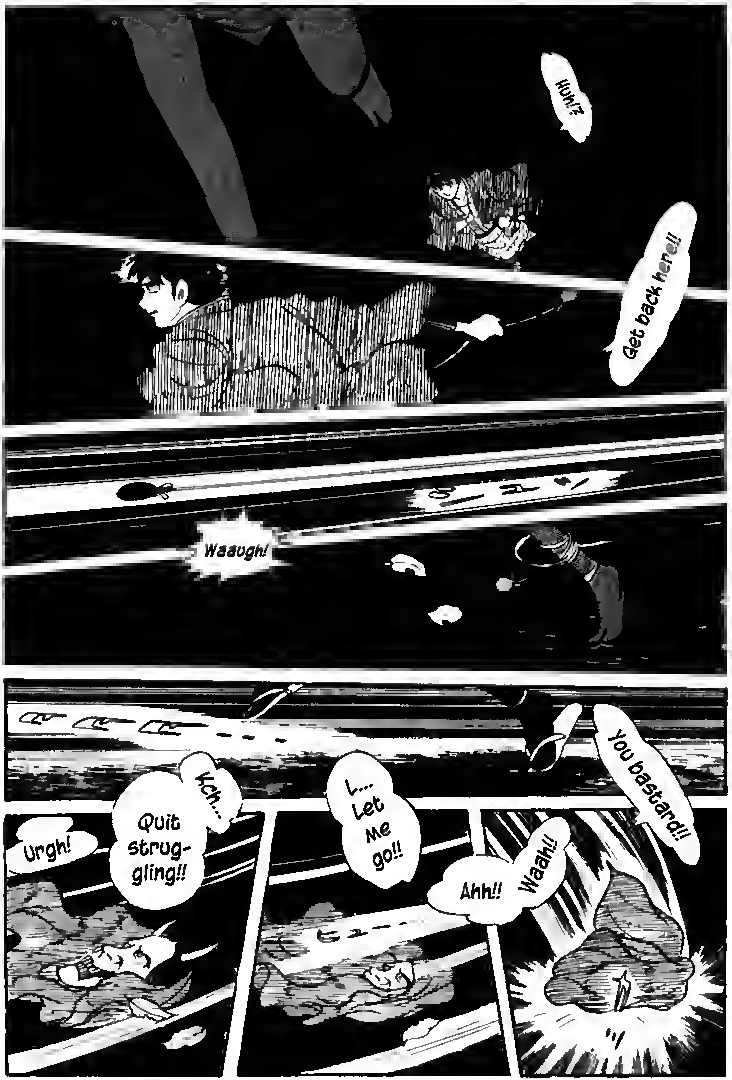
佐武と市捕物控
SABU & ICHI
CHAPTER 48
PRESENTED BY
HOKUTO NO GUN
AND
HAPPY SCANS
TRANSLATED BY
SYSTEMATICCHAOS
CLEANED BY
WRIGHT
TYPESETTING BY
KAZUHIKO
PROOFREADING BY
ANGELOFCHAOTIX
CREDITS PAGE
BY TROBMAN
WRITTEN BY
ISHINOMORI
SHŌTARŌ

Chapter 49: Fine Line

ピー!
キャン
キャン
キャン

ヒュウ
ヒュウ
ヒュウ
ヒュウ
オーオーオー
ヒュウ

ヒュウ…
HMM
IZ
YOU....!!

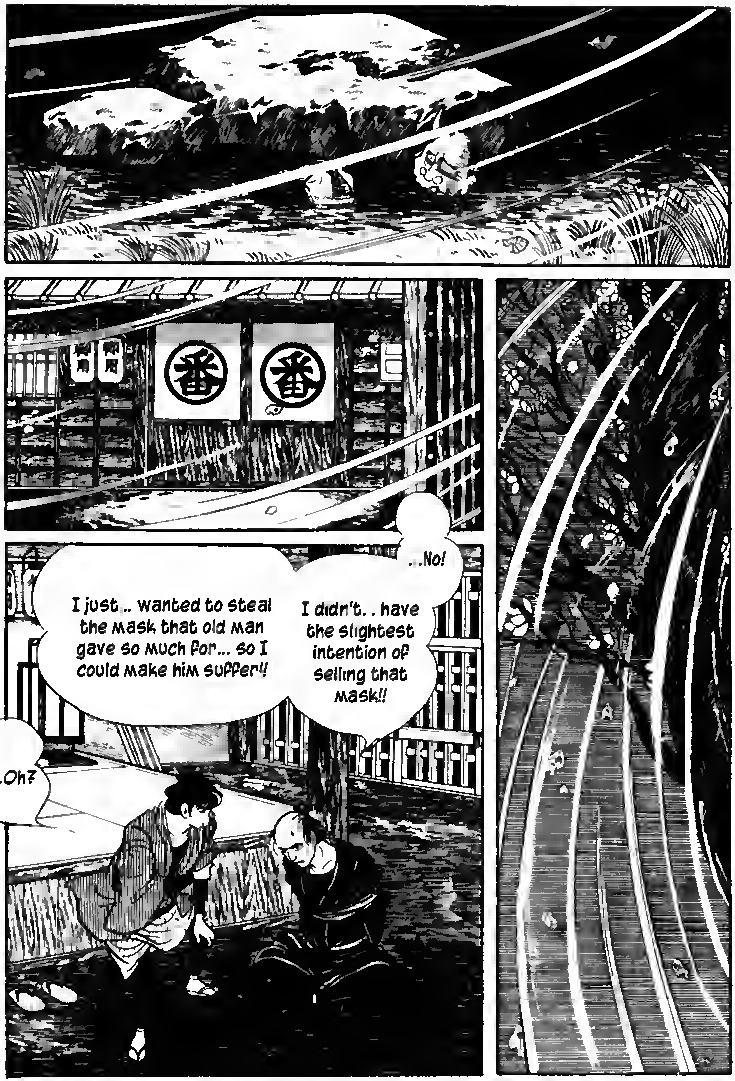

Huh!?
Get back here!!
Waaugh!
You bastard!!
Waah!!
Ahh!!
L... Let me go!!
Kch...
Quit strug-gling!!
Urgh!

...
Phew...
Ichi!?
Oh, Sabu.
What's the matter?
Who's this..!?
I did catch him and throw him into the guardhouse, though...
Heh... Well, that was a pretty strange thief.

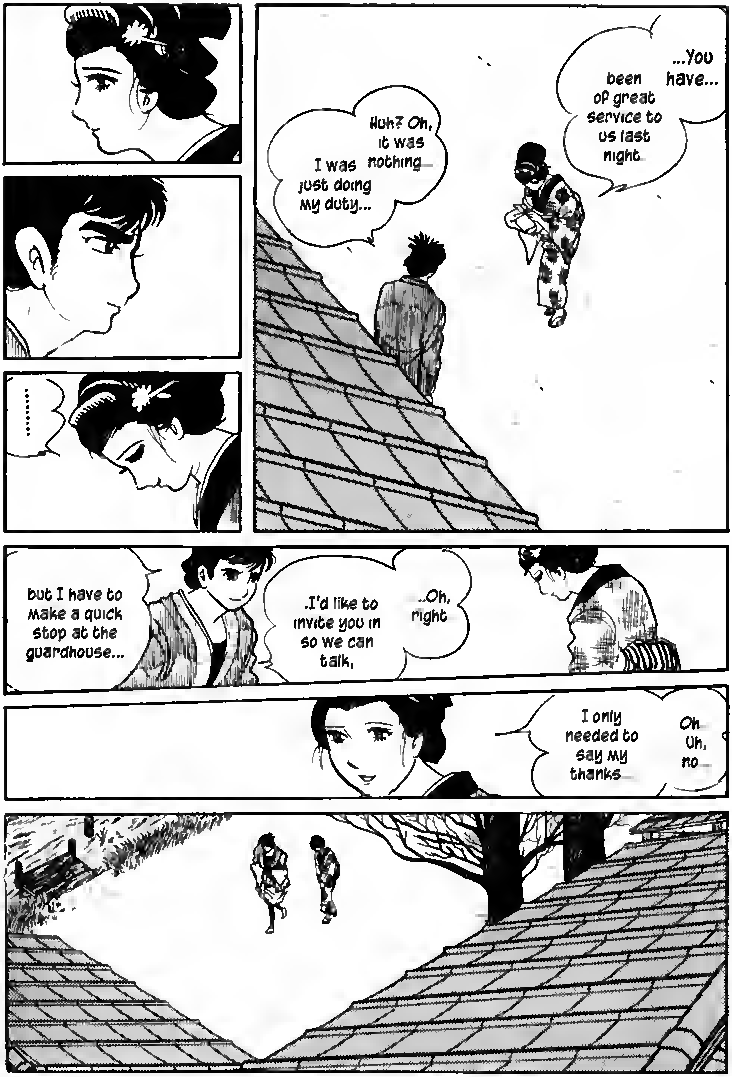
I'm fine now. It's nothing.
……
……
No wonder that thief had this..
this is... Master Kanjo Kangetsu and his daughter Waka.
Sabu,
...The Master was struck on the back of his head...
Oh, the mask!
so you're the famous Noh mask artist...?
Oh,

..That bastard didn't say a word... but I could tell by this Your work would fetch a very high price.
It really is impressive. Very intense!!
Enough flattery!!
Huh?
.. No, I was honestly impressed ...!
Fa-ther!!
Unnngh...!
I'll show you what I think of this!!
Ahh!!
W-What are you...!?

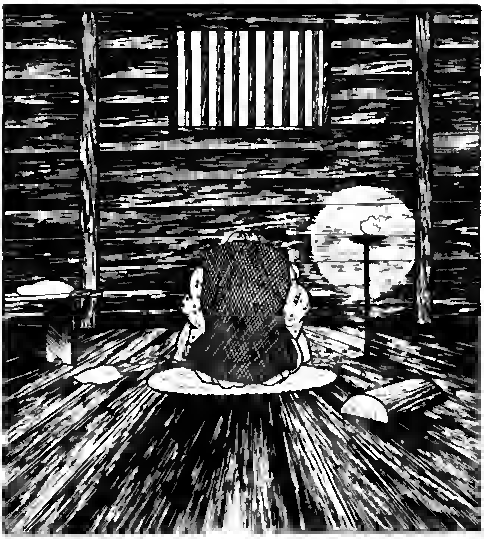
doing !?
F-Father, why... why would you destroy a mask you took a month to create!?
Heh... heh... Ha ha ha..
はは
.....
...I-I'm no good anymore!!
I've lost the strength to make any more masks!
This Hannya mask was a failure!!
It had no spirit in it! It was no more than a mask!!
I couldn't engrave the spirit of a Yaksa into it!!
.....

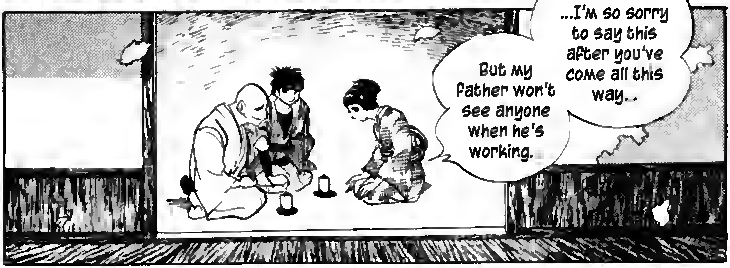

I just .. wanted to steal the mask that old man gave so much for... so I could make him supper!!
..No!
I didn't. . have the slightest intention of selling that mask!!
...Oh?

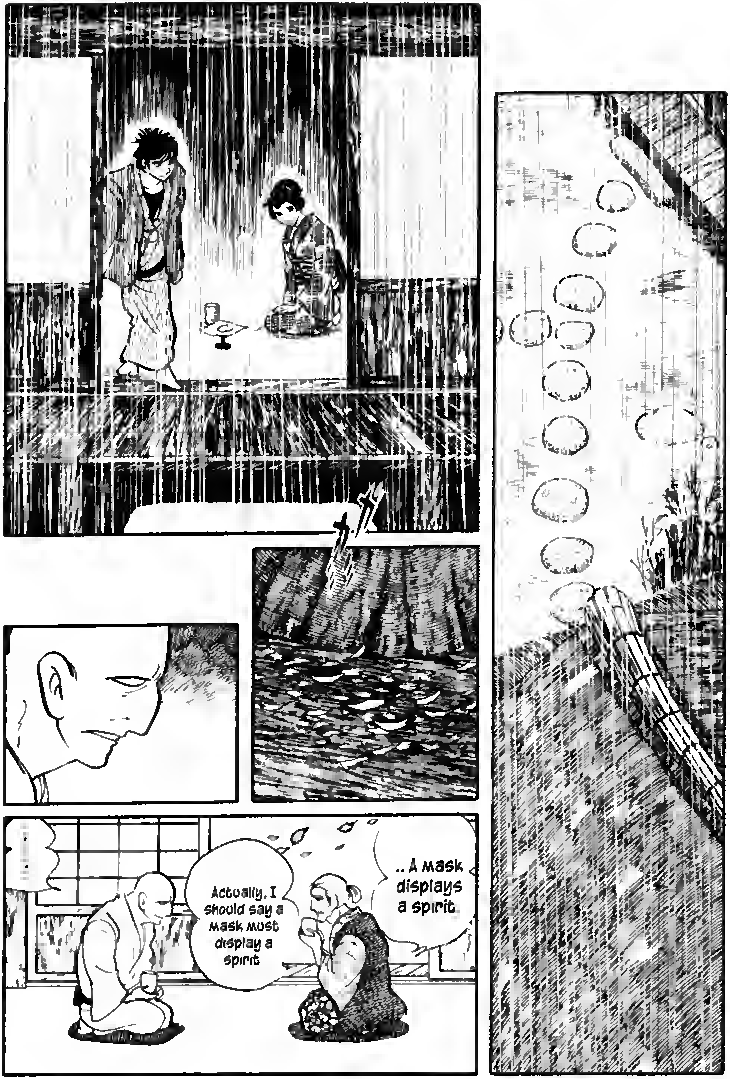
Ah...
Hey!

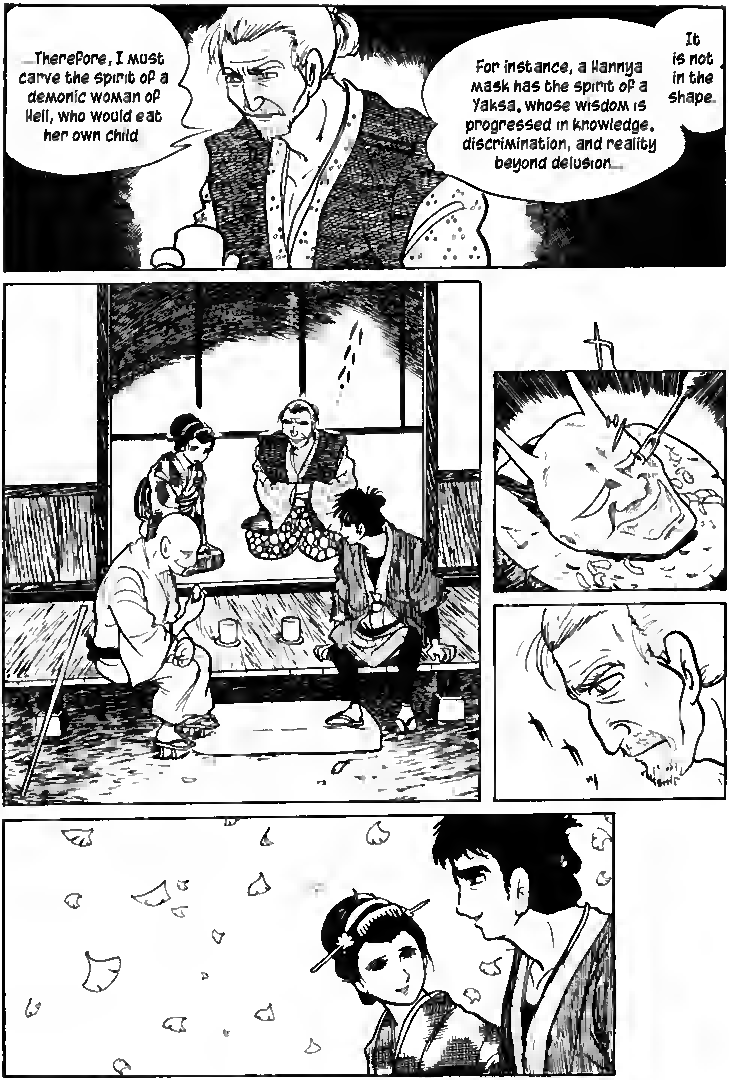

...You have been of great service to us last night.
Huh? Oh, it was nothing— I was just doing my duty...
.....
..Oh, right
.I'd like to invite you in so we can talk,
but I have to make a quick stop at the guardhouse...
I only needed to say my thanks—
Oh. Uh, no—

"I really could learn something from that attitude of not letting any compromise into your work...
He said, "He sure is a master. He's far better than just "good".
Well... By that time, Ichi was completely impressed.
"...If I could, I'd love to stop by and ask him all kinds of things..."
Yes... Tell him he can stop by anytime he likes.
But when he's not slaving away, he's a very kind man...
.. My father may be a little odd sometimes, as you saw,




But my father won't see anyone when he's working.
...I'm so sorry to say this after you've come all this way...


Actually, I should say a mask must display a spirit
.. A mask displays a spirit.


Therefore, I must carve the spirit of a demonic woman of Hell, who would eat her own child
For instance, a Hannya mask has the spirit of a Yaksa, whose wisdom is progressed in knowledge, discrimination, and reality beyond delusion
It is not in the shape

...Sabu, don't go making Midori cry.
Huh?
What?
...That girl, Waka... Did you know, Sabu, that she's been married before, and come back home?
I knew
As a matter of fact, that mask thief... was Waka's husband!!

..He was convinced that her father brought her back.
He said he stole the mask.. because he wanted the Master to feel what it was like having something he loved taken from him.
...Waka... has a suppressed sensuality in her voice and smell...
I thought that she would make any man... any young man bend to her whim . but...
Waka told me that she's not gonna consider marriage again.
Don't you worry, Ichi!
Ha!
Aha ha!
She said that the master stopped carving masks because she got married, so she left him and went back home. .!!
I see
..Is that what she told you..?
.....

I see, come to think of it, the Master did say that ever since the Hannya Mask he presented to the Shogun two years ago... a Noh Mask so well-appraised that it was heralded as the masterpiece of Kangetsu's lifetime, he hasn't carved a single mask.
As proof, the mask he carved for the Shogun... was carved right after his daughter was married.
I think he didn't stop carving because his daughter went to get married..
But,
He said that carving a mask would be meaningless unless it surpassed that mask ..!!

...Did something happen?
You seem strangely happy today, Waka
My father says he's going to carve something good this time...
He's shut himself in his workshop for two days now...
Yes.
That's good to hear
Oh?
My father's been in agony for the past two or three years...

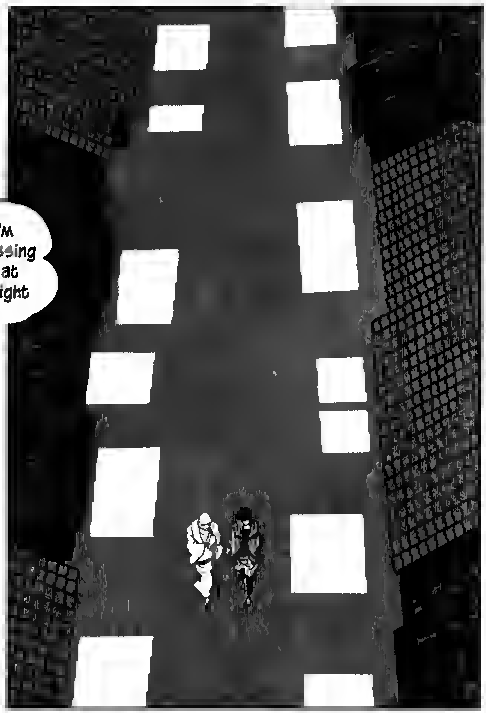
No, I can't have you do that...
I'll make you a meal later.
Sabu, you have time today, don't you?
..Is that so ..?
After all, poor men don't get time off.
Running around all day is basically my business...
Huh?
Oh, wait!
Alright then..
..There's a loose string on your shoulder ..
.....

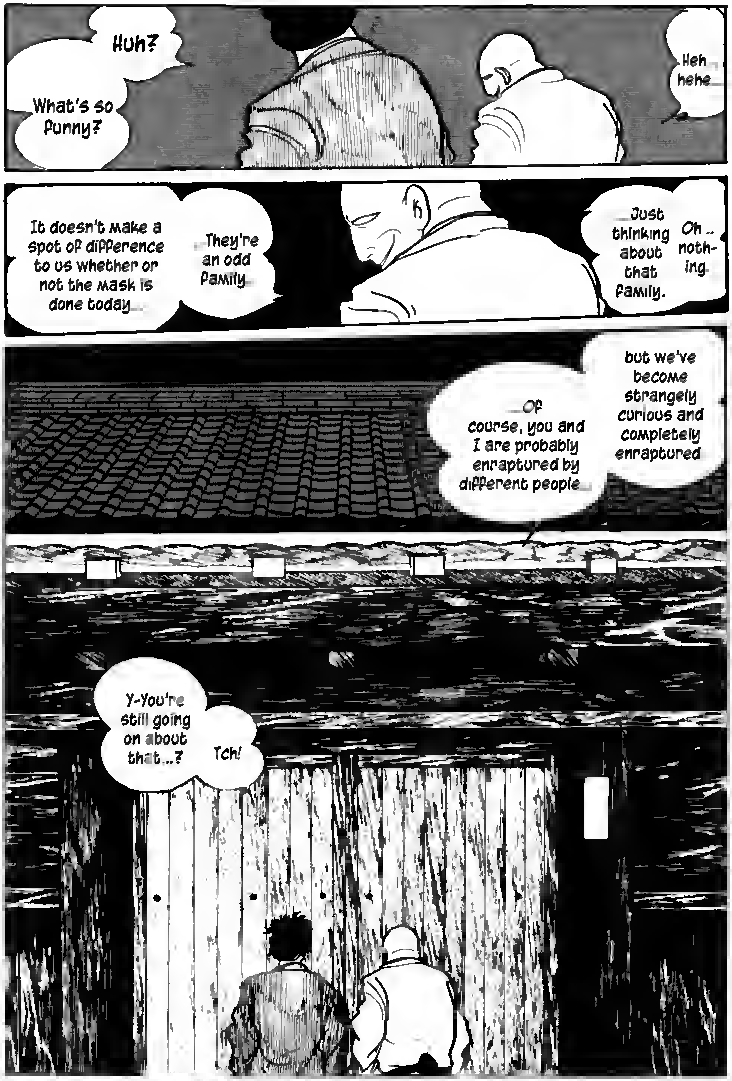
Y-Yes.
...It seems like it's almost done . but I'm worried. He hasn't even slept at night!!
The mask still isn't done...?
..Is the Master working today?

She said it'll be done in two or three days.

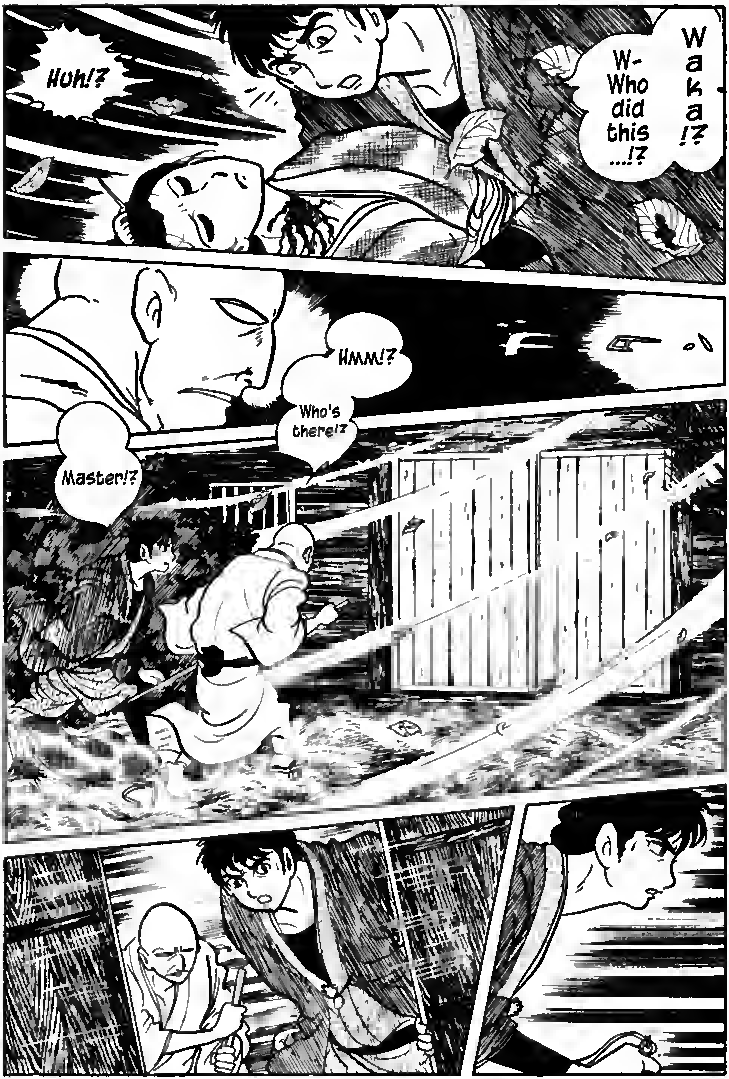
I'm guessing that tonight the carving will be done.

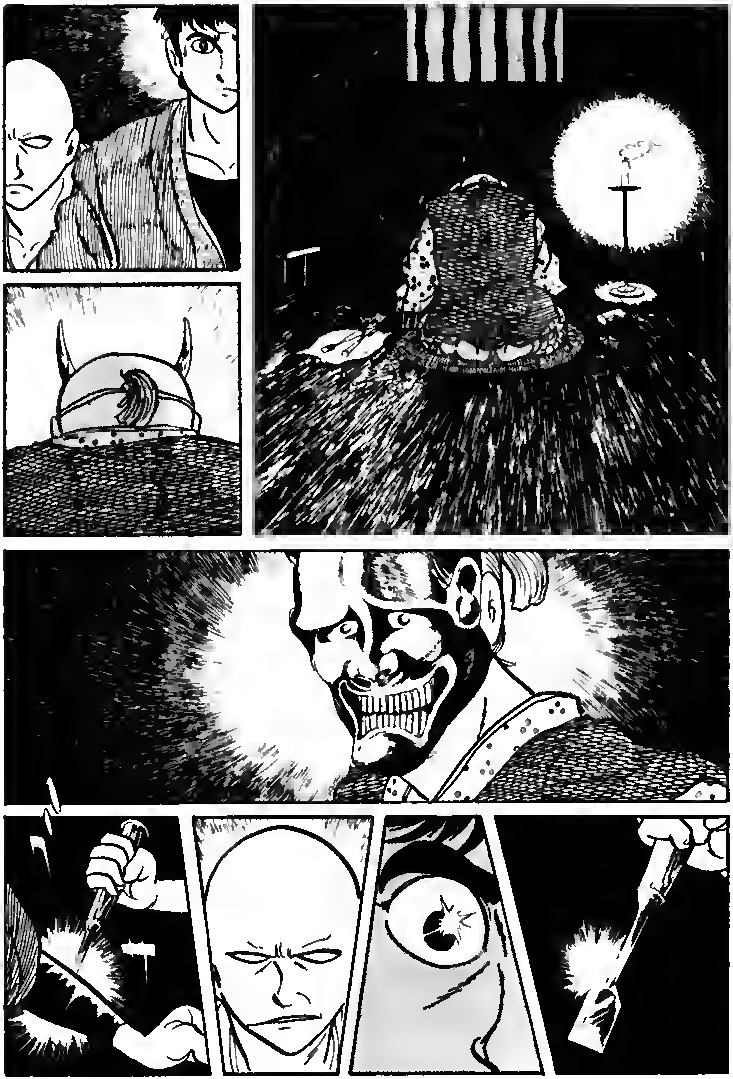
...I hope it turned out good...

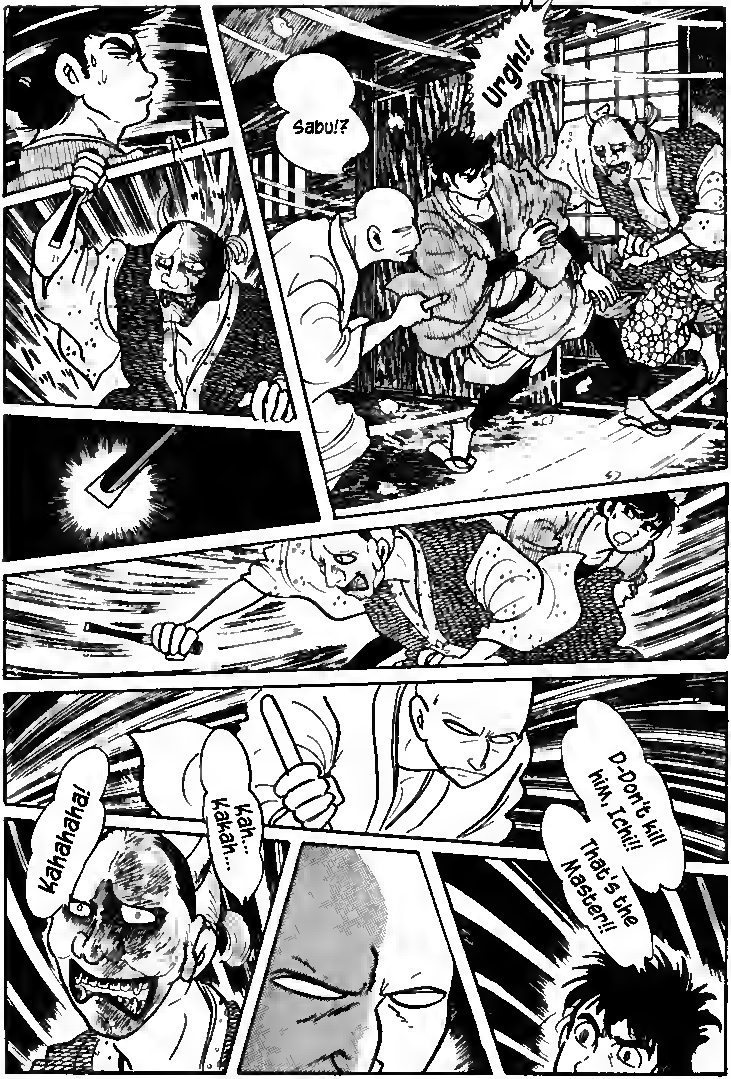



Huh?
What's so funny?
Heh hehe...
It doesn't make a spot of difference to us whether or not the mask is done today...
They're an odd family...
Just thinking about that family.
Oh... nothing.
Of course, you and I are probably enraptured by different people...
but we've become strangely curious and completely enraptured
Y-You're still going on about that...?
Tch!

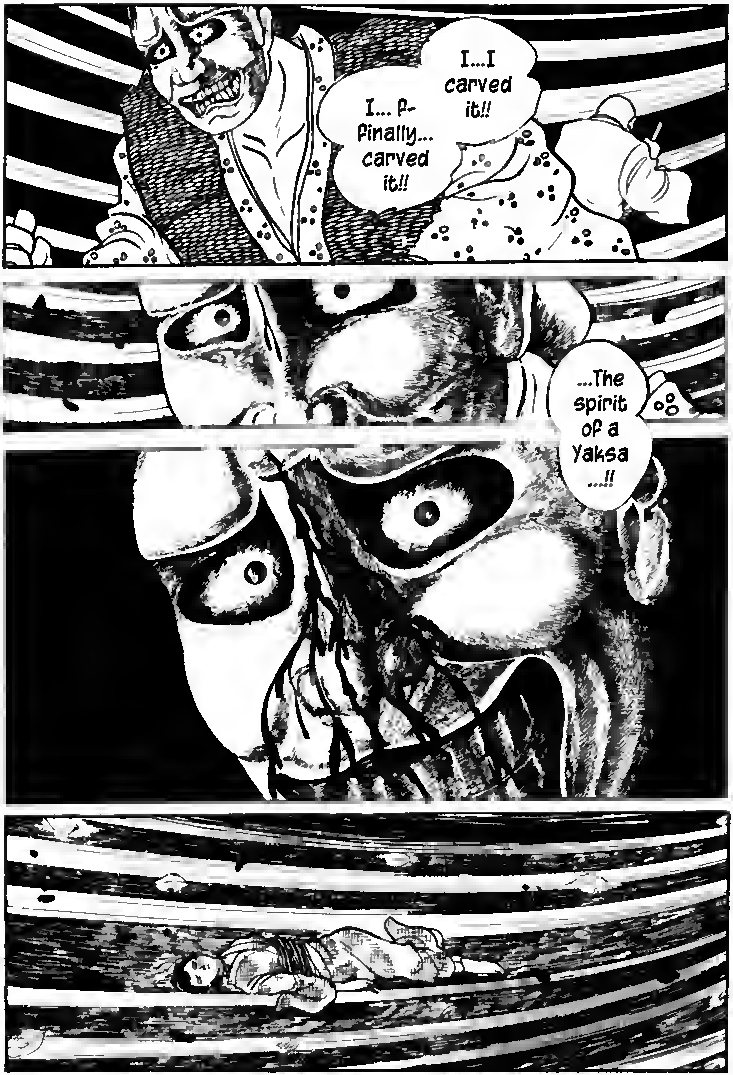
...Waka!?


Waka!?
W-Who did this...!?
Huh!?
Hmm!?
Who's there!?
Master!?




Urgh!!
Sabu!?
D-Don't kill him, Ichi!!
That's the Master!!
Kah... kakah...
Kahahaha!

...He's lost it...!!


I... f-finally... carved it!!
I...I carved it!!
...The spirit of a Yaksa ...!!

...Nanjo Kangetsu... became a Yaksa himself to infuse his mask with a Yaksa's spirit.
His previous mask became a masterpiece because he made his hatred for his daughter who abandoned him and got married into a spirit.
But to carve another mask, he believed that he needed a greater hatred... the spirit of a demon of Hell who would kill his own beloved daughter.
...The love between them, particularly the Father's for his daughter... was so great it was dangerous.
And when he learned that his daughter's heart... or should I say body... that had already known a man was starting to yield to Sabu...
Kangetsu decided to carve another mask.
But he could not surpass his previous work with just that!!
And so...

I slew Kangetsu when he came to his senses though he may have been in his right mind the whole time...
because I didn't think he could bear the weight of the price of the mask!!
There's a fine line
between genius and madness love and hatred The human spirit is weak and dangerous and impossible to understand ..!!

佐武と市捕物控[8]　夏の詩

小学館文庫

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